ROME AND THE PAPACY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE ROMAN CAMPAGNA AND ITS TREASURES

THE UNION OF CHURCH AND STATE

IDEALIZED REPRESENTATION OF PIUS II AND THE EMPEROR FREDERIC III

From the woodcut in Schedel's Chronicle, Nurenberg, 1493

ROME AND THE PAPACY

AN ESSAY ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE

BY

GILBERT BAGNANI

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO
MRS. ARTHUR STRONG
in gratitude
for a long and inspiring
friendship

PREFACE

A CONSIDERABLE portion of this book was written before the Lateran Treaty between the Italian Government and the Vatican put an end to the 'Roman Question' and inaugurated a new period in the history of the Italian Church. The material and still more the moral importance of this event is very great, yet it has hardly influenced to the slightest degree the course of my argument. Its importance is more domestic than international; in the Speech from the Throne the King of Italy rightly declared that the Lateran Treaty completes and perfects the union of Italy. Together with the late war it marks the end of the 'Risorgimento.'

At the present day, however, the relations between Church and State—and in this case I mean by the former organized religion as a whole, not merely the Roman Catholic Church—have assumed fresh importance all over the world. On the continent of Europe, where, during the last century, Liberalism had been able almost everywhere to separate Church from State, the ideal of the 'Lay State' seems to have been definitely abandoned. The governments of Europe, both new and old, have found it to be both necessary and expedient to resume or inaugurate diplomatic relations with the Vatican and to grant to their national Churches a considerable measure of political authority and personality. The most recent example of this ten-

dency is the constitution of the autocephalous Greek Church in Albania. Even France, that staunch and aggressive champion of Liberalism, though it has not, as yet, repealed the '*Lois Laicques*,' has resumed diplomatic relations with the Vatican, has exercised to the full its rights under the Concordat in Alsace and Lorraine, and has now recognized some missionary orders and has restored some of the confiscated property. We have seen a Protestant President of the Republic confer the purple on a nuncio, we may live to see a successor of Loubet drive in state to the Vatican. No doubt MM. Poincaré and Briand can claim with truth that the letter of the '*Lois Laicques*' is still perfect and inviolate, yet the actions of the French Governments since the war seem hardly in keeping with the spirit of M. Combes.

In England, on the other hand, the extraordinary outcome of the Prayer Book controversy is the natural result of that Erastianism which, always popular in England, was the chief cause of the Reformation. It is, as it were, the *reductio ad absurdum* of the ideal of a national as opposed to an international Christianity. Although the English Establishment has acquired through the course of centuries a momentum against which reason and logic are probably alike powerless, the mere talk of disestablishment as a not too remote possibility is full of interest and significance.

A history of the relations between organized Christianity and the State could fill as many volumes as this book contains pages. It would in many ways embrace the history of the whole world and might lead to an exhaustive study of law, theology, and

even anthropology. The present work is more in the nature of an essay—an attempt to define a problem which perhaps has no satisfactory solution. How can a religion, universal and unlimited in character and moral authority, co-operate with forces that are strictly temporal, limited by national, geographical and political frontiers, yet possess within these frontiers a material and immediate authority? And this question may give rise to another yet more subtle and difficult: is political establishment to the ultimate advantage of the Church of Christ militant on earth, or is not the Church most powerful when most oppressed and persecuted? We in Italy have seen how former generations, educated by priests and in convents, became almost without exception materialists and free-thinkers. My own generation, educated by those materialists and free-thinkers, is now religious and Catholic. We have been victorious: we have restored religious teaching to the schools and the sacrament of marriage to the civil code. Yet we may wonder what will be the effect of our victory on succeeding generations.

It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that on the one hand I write as a convinced Catholic, on the other as an historian and not as a theologian or an apologist. It is possible to limit oneself to the facts of history without forgetting to admire and adore that Divinity whose influence can be traced throughout the whole course of human events. Two other warnings may be less superfluous. It was natural that, with the constitution of United Italy, the new Italian nationalism should adopt as its own the traditions and glories of ancient Rome, of which

it considered itself to be the legitimate heir. This idea, though natural, is completely false. Modern Italy has no more to do with ancient Rome than modern France with Charlemagne or modern England with King Arthur. The Roman Empire was Roman, not Italian; its last most serious war was against its revolted Italian allies, and when it ceased to be Roman it became international and universal. Let no one read my references to the Roman Empire as allusions to the present Italian State.

It might, however, be suspected that I am inclined to attribute the universal character of the Catholic Church to the universal political authority of the Roman Empire. Nothing could be farther from my thoughts or beliefs than this heresy, so justly condemned by the Pope in a recent letter to Cardinal Gasparri. The universality of the Christian revelation is one of the most important results of Christ's mission which was *gentibus*—unto all men without distinction. On the other hand, the universality of the Roman Empire was at first a practical fact, never a political theory. The political constitution of the Empire undoubtedly favoured the diffusion of the Christian idea over the whole world, but that idea was universal from its very birth. The medieval conception of the universal authority of the Roman Empire was itself derived from the example and authority of the Church. The two ideas became closely interwoven, but they are essentially distinct. Though the Roman Empire undoubtedly influenced the historical—not the dogmatic—development of Christianity, to a far

greater extent Christianity influenced, and indeed kept alive, the Roman Empire. The ecclesiastical primacy of the Roman See is exclusively due to St Peter's authority, yet in the foundation of that See by the Prince of the Apostles we can without disrespect admire the infallible action of the Divine Providence, which thus closely identified the Church Militant with the city that was the *τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐπιτομή*.

I must thank Mrs. Arthur Strong, Mlle. Aline Lion, and Mr. John Murray for having read my manuscript and made many helpful suggestions; but, in fairness to them, I should add that the ideas expressed are entirely my own.

GILBERT BAGNANI

Rome
September, 1929

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Roma autem cum caput mundi et urbium domina est et vocetur, sola reges imperare facit; cumque principis sanctorum corpus suo sinu refoveat, merito principem terrarum ipsa constituere debet.

Vita Antiquior S. Adalberti, 21

CHAPTER I

THE PAGAN WORLD

Condita est civitas Roma per quam Deo placuit orbem debellare terrarum, et in unam societatem legumque perductum longe lateque pacare.

S. Augustinus, ' De Civ. Dei,' xviii. 22.

THE propagation and establishment of the Christian religion is the greatest of the many achievements of the Roman Empire. The clear logic of the Middle Ages openly declared that this was its appointed task and that Rome, through Pilate, had offered up the sacrifice necessary for the redemption of the human race. The establishment of Christianity was, it is true, one of the chief causes of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, but not, as Gibbon contended, on account of the inherent weaknesses and defects of that religion, but rather because the Empire, having thus accomplished its work, gradually made way for the new civilization it had itself prepared.

The speed with which the new religion spread over the Mediterranean world, a miracle which Dante considered sufficient to prove its Divine origin, was hardly checked for an instant by official distrust or by sporadic, if intensive, persecution. It was only possible because Rome had broken down all political and linguistic barriers between the different nations. The international character of the

Roman Empire not only allowed the free communication of ideas but also destroyed the last traces of official paganism. The world was awaiting a new religion, and Rome furnished the means by which it could be propagated.

Religion is indeed a Latin word of obscure origin, but real religion, such as we understand it, was unknown to Greece and Rome. By religion we do not, or should not, mean the appeasing or influencing of a Supreme Being for our own temporal ends. The first object of a religion is to answer those metaphysical questions which can be satisfactorily answered only by a Divine Revelation: the existence and attributes of God, the reasons and conditions of our existence on earth, our hopes of a future life. It must next propound a system of ethics, showing us how to live in obedience to God's will in order that we may deserve His rewards. To help us accomplish this task it may then give us direct assistance from God through the sacraments, administered by a special class of persons set apart for the purpose. A true religion is therefore exclusive, dogmatic, sacramental and sacerdotal, as different as possible from nearly all forms of classical paganism.

Greek civilization was based on the πόλις, the City-State, and we should therefore talk about the cults of the Greek cities rather than about Greek religion. The Athene worshipped in the Parthenon was an entirely different divinity from the Athene of the Brazen House in Sparta. The importance of the Games and of a few oracular shrines was more political than religious; it proved the unity of the

Hellenic race but not that of its religious beliefs. In the East the city was of less consequence, and Eastern divinities are usually either dynastic or tribal; the struggle between Ra of Heliopolis and Amon of Thebes was purely dynastic. Jahweh was the God of the Beni Israel long before He became localized in Jerusalem. Roman religion was still vaguer, for it tended on the one hand to become law and custom, *jus* and *mos*, the corner-stones of the Roman State, on the other to degenerate into superstition destined either to assuage the fears of the multitude or to furnish politicians with obstructionist weapons. In all cases the national or civic cults were inseparable from the political constitution of the State itself, and the punctilious observance of the rites was part of the ordinary routine of government. The sacrifices were more in the nature of bribes to the divinity than sacraments in the modern sense, and in Greece and Italy were not necessarily offered by a priest. In the East a sacerdotal class was allowed to develop entirely separate from the rest of the population, and it gradually tended, especially in Egypt and in Israel, to usurp the real political power. In the West, above all in Rome, the official priesthoods were either comfortable sinecures or convenient stepping-stones in a political career.

It is obvious that the City-State can exist only in conditions of comparative isolation, both physical and intellectual, and its cults can be accepted only so long as the inhabitants of the city consider all other peoples, nations and languages complete barbarians. The growth of civilization and the con-

sequent growth of commercial and intellectual relations soon render such exclusivism impossible. In the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. the struggles with Persia and with Carthage, and later the formation of the Athenian and Spartan empires, began to impair the conception of the City-State, till the conquests of Alexander not only submerged all local jealousies but destroyed Greece itself by creating a new civilization neither Greek nor Egyptian nor Asiatic, but truly international. The Roman Empire swept away the last traces of the City-State and of the religious systems with which it was interwoven.

The importance of philosophy in directly undermining the official cults of paganism has been very much exaggerated. Intellectual activity was the inevitable result of that same extension of civilization that destroyed the πόλις. Herodotus is a traveller and a cosmopolitan and considers foreign religions with the same interested detachment with which he studies foreign manners and customs. It was unnecessary to attack religion as such; the ancient myths wilted and died when examined with a greater historical knowledge and a wider outlook.

The Roman Empire was at first the empire of a City-State, but after the Punic Wars it was gradually and inevitably transformed. External pressure, such as the social wars, and internal decay brought about vast extensions of the franchise, and the City-State collapsed through its inherent inability to deal with international, rather than municipal, affairs. By the first century B.C. Rome had lost its civic character and had become the greatest city in the world,

the τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐπιτομή. Roman civilization does not mean the civilization of Rome, a city which became rich and powerful before it became civilized, but a great cosmopolitan civilization without frontiers or nationality, based partly on the Roman genius for law and administration and partly on the intellectual and artistic activity of Hellenism. Cicero, Livy, Horace, Virgil were Italians rather than Romans, Trajan was a Spaniard, Severus an African, Constantine was born in Dacia, Justinian in Illyria. Pliny, a native of Como, seems to have found himself more at home in Bithynia than many a Piedmontese official finds himself to-day in Sicily. Unlike British rule, that of Rome was not over subject or inferior races, nor was there a predominance of any one race. The Stoics had preached the brotherhood of man: Caracalla had granted Roman citizenship to all free subjects of the Empire. No political frontiers, no national jealousies, no difficulties of language could impede the rapid diffusion of new ideas. Only between the East and the West was there an ill-defined line of cleavage, which as time went on grew more and more accentuated. But during the first two centuries of the Empire the union of East and West was a happy marriage.

With the growth of the Empire, the official religion of Rome, unsustained even by the intrinsic beauty of many of the Greek myths, necessarily collapsed. But the religious observances were intimately bound up with the political constitution, which was then only conceivable on a religious basis. The outward forms continued to exist, although all belief in them had been lost. For Ovid and Virgil

the ancient myths are no more real than are the glories of chivalry for Boiardo and Ariosto. During the prosperous times of the early Empire an attempt was made to create a cult of success, a worship of big business. Mercury, Fortune, Abundance, the individual Genius, the personification of the City were the chief gods, and the whole Empire united to pay religious tribute to the Empire itself, to Rome and Augustus. What need to seek transcendent gods? Was not business flourishing and was not the prosperity of the Empire due not to a remote divinity but to Augustus, the *praesens Divus?*

The worship of success cannot last for long nor can it be accepted *ubique et ab omnibus*. The position of an intellectual and religious man was indeed terrible: the ancient religion had gone and could not be rationalized or transformed, while the cult of Rome and Augustus was pure materialism. Philosophy might at the most satisfy the reason but could not supply the aid and the comfort of a true religion. This tragic situation can be fully studied in Lucretius, the most religious and mystical of the ancient poets. His Epicurean philosophy was no real comfort; and could he have been a Christian the Calendar would know another saint. This discontent was not confined to the intellectual classes alone; in the decoration of the tombs we see a constant preoccupation about the future and the hopes of a better existence beyond the grave.[1]

The problem was further complicated by the fact that all the cults which could have had a measure

[1] For the whole subject see Mrs. Arthur Strong, *Apotheosis and After Life*, London, 1915, and M. Rostovtzeff, *Mystic Italy*.

of success were based on mysteries only revealed to initiates and were thus outside any control by a government which was not itself an initiate. Moreover, they were of a foreign origin, and thus tended to break down all social and racial distinctions. This question was of special importance when, as in the case of the Jews and of the Egyptians, the religion was that of a civilization very different from the established social order. Privileges had been granted to the race rather than to the religion: the same privileges could not be safely extended to proselytes. European countries rightly tolerate polygamy in the East, yet a European cannot excuse bigamy by pleading conversion to Islam. The government was thus obliged to allow the world to find the universal religion it desired, yet it had to maintain the religious basis of the State itself and above all some measure of State control.

The religions which, apart from Christianity, fought for supremacy in the Roman world may be divided into four great classes. The first comprises what we may term the philosophical religions which were derived from a religious interpretation of Greek philosophy; and especially Neo-Platonism, Neo-Pythagoreanism, which was the fashionable religion under the Julio-Claudians, and Stoicism, which was predominant in the Imperial constitution from the Flavians to Severus. They could never hope to become universal, but owing to the high intellectual standard of their followers they exercised an immense influence on art, civilization and thought. The diffusion of Christianity among the upper classes was greatly facilitated by the ease

with which its truths could be explained in terms of Neo-Platonism, a tendency which culminated in Origen. If, as is probable, the work of Longinus on the Sublime was written during the Early Empire, perhaps under Tiberius, it would prove that the intellectuals of that time had a very friendly knowledge of Hebrew metaphysics. The Bible was accessible in the Greek translation, and the Jewish wars and the works of Josephus must have still further increased the familiarity with Jewish customs and thought, and thus prepared the way for Christianity.

The policy of the State towards the philosophical sects was cautious, for the social and intellectual prominence of their supporters gave them an important position in the community. The Stoics, who were really political philosophers, were persecuted with considerable vigour by the Flavians in their unsuccessful attempt to found a hereditary autocracy. The accession of Nerva marked the triumph of Stoicism, which retained its ascendant till, after Marcus Aurelius, a return to the hereditary principle showed that official philosophy had lost its power and prepared the way for the new absolutism of the third century. The Jews were forbidden to proselytize, a prohibition that their own exclusive spirit and insistence on circumcision rendered almost unnecessary, but there was an important and influential class of official Gentile sympathizers, *σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν*, which perhaps included the Empress Poppaea Sabina. The Sophists came under the general laws about intellectuals, while the Neo-Pythagoreans, who alone seem to have developed

a religious liturgy, were regarded with great suspicion, and occasionally persecuted.

The second group of religions comprises the various Dionysiac mysteries. The worship of Dionysos was at a very early date introduced into Greece perhaps from the semi-barbarian tribes of Thrace, and developed locally in different cities, together with similar cults such as Orphism, the cult of the Kabeirioi, or the Association of the Iobacchoi. As imported into Italy, these cults were entirely secret and outside any form of State control or supervision, and seem indeed to have been technically illegal. Almost all our knowledge about them is derived from archæological discoveries, which prove them to have had an elaborate ritual, and to have been extremely popular during the first century A.D. among the upper middle classes. These cults were the first to come into official collision with the State. A Bacchanalian cult had been introduced into Etruria as early as the second century B.C.; in a short time it had spread over the whole of Italy and rapidly degenerated into sensual orgies. In 186 B.C. some alleged scandals were brought to light, and the government, alarmed at the spread of foreign ideas, acted with ferocious energy, and put to death a great number of persons. But the State took care not to offend any real religious sentiment; it simply wished to obtain a supervision or control over the mysteries. The religion itself was not forbidden, but the meetings of the devotees had to be licensed by the *praetor urbanus*.

The famous cult of Sarapis is in a class by itself,

for it may be considered, like its home Alexandria, a typical product of Hellenistic civilization. This divinity, apparently the obscure local god of Sinope in the Pontus, was introduced by the first Ptolemy and was gradually invested with all the attributes of almost every divinity in the Mediterranean world. The Egyptians, at first actively hostile, later identified him with Osiris, and even the large Jewish colony seems to have been favourable, for the Early Fathers declare that in Egypt the Patriarch Joseph was worshipped as Sarapis. The syncretistic nature of the cult was typical of the syncretistic character of the Alexandrine civilization, but it does not seem to have become very popular at any time outside Egypt itself.

The fourth class comprises the so-called Oriental cults, viz. of Isis and Osiris, of Cybele, of Attys and Adonis, of the Oriental Sun-God Baal, of Mithras. All these religions had a considerable vogue at different times and among different sections of the population. The earliest in the field was that of Cybele, the first foreign cult to be introduced in Rome; the latest were the various cults of Baal and of Syrian divinities, which reached their apogee in the third century, when the Empire was gradually changing into an Oriental autocracy. The cult of Isis was popular, especially among women, during the first century A.D. when, in consequence of the campaign against Cleopatra, all things Egyptian became very fashionable. The foreign priesthoods were a constant source of preoccupation for the State, which frequently attempted to suppress them, but with only temporary success.

These Oriental religions were not introduced in their native form; they were, so to speak, modernized in an effort to render them more acceptable to the Western mind. But most of the liturgical practices, castration, circumcision, religious prostitution, blood baptism, were fundamentally opposed to Western ideas. The most successful of these religions was the cult of the Persian Sun God Mithras, which became almost entirely Europeanized. It was chiefly prevalent among the legions quartered on the frontiers, and was consequently greatly shaken when the frontiers themselves and the Roman military organization began to give way during the third century.

None of these religions could be considered a real rival to Christianity, none could have become a world-wide religion, accepted alike by the East and by the West, by the intellectuals and by the proletariat. Chief among their weaknesses was their toleration of the discredited official cults and of one another. The support of the State could not compensate this defect in their logical position, and the moment this support was withdrawn they naturally disappeared. It was obvious that the worshippers of Cybele and of Mithras might both be wrong but could not possibly both be right, a point argued with great effect by the early Christian apologists. The real monotheistic character of Mithraism was rendered vain by its recognition of the Imperial cult. A real religion is perforce intolerant, and the intolerance which Christianity inherited from Judaism ensured its complete triumph. It was in vain that the Pagans pointed out the moral beauties

and temporal advantages of comprehensiveness and broadmindedness, the answer was always the same: there can be no compromise with error, the Truth is great and will prevail.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY CHURCH

Gauderemus Romam factam Hierosolymam.
S. Hieronymus, '*Epist,*' 127, 956.

NEITHER the hostility of the State nor the opposition of rival religions could seriously endanger the progress of Christianity. The real danger came from within, from internal disruptive tendencies which would have scattered over the Empire a number of churches or sects differing in discipline, ritual and belief. Active persecution was no hardship; it allowed enthusiasts to obtain a martyr's crown, it could be avoided without great difficulty by weaker brethren, and it increased sympathy for and knowledge of the new religion. Yet the illegal position of the Church was in itself a great hardship. Property could only be held or legacies received through legal fictions and on insecure tenure, as at the present time in countries which have confiscated ecclesiastical property or forbidden certain congregations. The Empire was one but by no means perfectly homogeneous; its unity was maintained by the centralized government personified in the Emperor, its foundations were law and organization. Everything that was not held together by this framework tended to fall to pieces, to become municipal or provincial.

The Apostolic age, that is to say the first period

in the history of the Christian Church, is the great missionary period. The unity of the Empire greatly favoured the work of proselytizing and the foundation of small, more or less independent Christian communities. Unfortunately we are almost completely in the dark as to their internal organization: at first they would, as far as possible, try to keep in touch with the person from whom they had received the truth, but, as time went on, they would naturally tend to become self-centred and autonomous. It is doubtful whether at first these communities had all the same organization, the institutions found in one town are not necessarily to be found in others. At first the distinction between bishops and presbyters was ill defined, and only towards the end of the first century was the principle of one church, one bishop, generally accepted in the East. The bishops and deacons, originally appointed by the Apostles themselves, were later freely elected by their congregations with the usual disadvantages of democracy. The first Clementine epistle proves that irregular elections took place at a very early date in the Church of Corinth. A number of regulations were gradually drawn up to deal with such matters, and they were to form the basis of canon law, but they could not acquire definite unity or legal force as long as the Church itself was outside formal legality. The charity and faith of a community was frequently abused by false missionaries, whose credentials could not be investigated and whose frauds could not be punished.

The unity of the Church, already precarious through the lack of administrative centralization,

was further imperilled by grave dogmatic differences. At the very outset, when it was only just beginning to spread outside Judea, the infant Church was obliged to settle the vital question of circumcision, an insistence on which would have rendered the conversion of the Gentiles impossible; as time went on fresh problems, both of dogma and of discipline, were constantly arising. Through honest individual speculation on matters which are outside the province of human reason, or through the plausible teaching of false 'apostles,' it was easy for many persons to fall almost unconsciously into the most extravagant errors. Of the two greatest apologists of pre-Constantinian times, Tertullian became a Montanist, while the orthodoxy of Origen is sometimes very dubious, even apart from his posthumous condemnation. Christ's promise and the example and teaching of the Apostles rendered infallibility in matters of dogma a prerogative of the whole Church of Christ on earth. The Church itself was the only authority. It was impossible to appeal to the scriptures, for as yet there was no authoritative canon, and every new heresy fortified its position with spurious or interpolated Gospels, Acts, or 'Sayings of Jesus.' It should always be remembered that the authority of our scriptures is drawn from that of the Church, not that of the Church from that of the scriptures. But, as Christianity began to penetrate into the farthest parts of the Empire, an appeal to the Church for corporate dogmatic guidance was almost impossible so long as the Church, unrecognized or opposed by the State, lacked unity of control and a definite legal position.

Tertullian, during the second century, advocated that questions of heresy should be referred to some of the Churches which had been founded by the Apostles. Such an appeal must often have been difficult in practice, and could never be final. The infallibility rested in the Church as a whole; it was not necessarily to be found in its parts. It was well within the bounds of possibility that an obscure point might be decided by two distant but equally Apostolic Churches in a different way, and it is curious that this difficulty should not have appeared obvious to Tertullian, who was to his cost familiar with the various conflicting factions within a single church. One important see would often tolerate, if not encourage, opinions which were violently opposed in another. The famous apocalyptic admonition to the seven Churches of Asia proves clearly that, as early as the end of the first century, some of the chief sees could be accused of dogmatic error, and we have already mentioned the irregularities at Corinth, the most important Church in Greece. A bishop could, and did, convoke meetings of his clergy and people; as the territorial gradation of the hierarchy grew more precise a metropolitan could, and did, convoke a synod in his own province; but it was impossible to convoke a general meeting of the Church which would possess the same authority as the first meeting of the Twelve in Jerusalem. How, where, and by whose authority could such a meeting be convoked? What would be the procedure of such an assembly? How could the personal safety of the delegates be guaranteed? How could their decisions be enforced?

The very zeal of the Christians for the propagation of the faith and for the strict observance of Christian morality was frequently an unconscious cause of error. In order to attract the intellectual classes it was necessary for Christianity to elaborate a philosophical theology, but it was far more difficult to set well-defined limits to theological speculation. Elements of Neo-Platonism are incorporated in the Fourth Gospel and in the Mystery of the Incarnate Word, but the intellectually attractive doctrine of immanence can easily result, even at the present day, in theoretical Monotheism and practical Pantheism. An insistence on the goodness of God, as proved by the life, the teaching, and the death of Christ, was weakened by the perplexing yet unquestionable presence of evil in the world, and many earnest and thoughtful souls tried to solve the contradiction by the familiar Oriental idea of Dualism. The subject of Baptism, its importance and its effects, was another source of constant controversy, which sometimes led to exaggerated ideas about penance, notably to the serious belief that moral sin after baptism was inexpiable and unpardonable.

Horrified by the more extravagant of these heresies, many devout Christians were led by their ardour into diametrically opposite but equally extravagant errors. The various Churches would occasionally condemn a particular doctrine or person but were quite unable to devise any satisfactory test of orthodoxy. Thus the Pantheism of the various Gnostic sects produced by reaction the Monarchian heresies of Praxeas and Sabellius, who,

by an excessive insistence on the Unity of God, endangered the Divinity of Christ. Thus the Ebionites, who closely followed the Mosaic law, were opposed by the Marcionites, the most anti-Jewish of the heretics. Thus, at a later time, St Augustine himself was led by his desire to confute Pelagius into that neutral, ill-defined territory that lies between truth and error, and St Cyril, in condemning Nestorius, prepared the way for the far graver monophysite errors. Gnosticism itself may almost be considered a separate religion formed by the Hellenization of Christianity, and it rapidly split up into a number of different sects, some of which might almost appear to be Christian, while others are almost entirely pagan. The history of Gnosticism shows how Christianity might have fallen to pieces in the same way had it not united to fight not only its official rivals but its far more dangerous imitators and corrupters.

The importance of unity, so often proclaimed by Christ Himself and by the Apostles, was understood and emphasized by all the various Churches. They kept in touch with one another by correspondence and by personal visits; advice and information were freely asked and freely given, and any important event in one of the leading communities was notified as a matter of courtesy and duty to the others. The example of the pagan Sophists and of the Apostles themselves was imitated by a number of travelling preachers and missionaries who, being unconnected with any one Church, were able to maintain the unity of the whole. Official missions, like those of Pothinus and

Irenaeus, were sent to the most remote parts of the Empire with great success, although occasionally an impostor, such as Peregrinus, would abuse the faith and credulity of a congregation. The occasional persecutions only increased the feeling of Christian solidarity and caused many of the faithful to take refuge in those provinces which were ruled by less zealous or more tolerant authorities. The increasing size of the congregations, with the consequent increasing complexity of administration, caused the primitive ill-defined priesthood to become a clearly graded hierarchy. The administrative divisions of the Empire allowed the communities to group themselves on a territorial basis and favoured the rise of a few great metropolitan sees.

The State was quite powerless to deal with the situation. Civil disabilities, though undoubtedly irksome, could be circumvented, while active persecution only rendered the Church stronger than ever. For a persecution to be really successful it is necessary that both parties should consider the point at issue of vital importance; that the persecutor should be animated by the same zeal that fortifies the resistance of the persecuted; above all that in persecuting an idea there should be another idea ready to take its place. Vigorous and relentless persecution, conducted by a powerful government without regard to its possible economic and social results, may sometimes be successful; it succeeded in destroying English Catholicism and French Protestantism, though it failed in Ireland and in Poland, where resistance was strengthened by national sentiment. But the persecution of religion

by an agnostic State is always futile; it failed lamentably during the French Revolution, it failed when practised in milder but still exasperating forms by the 'Lay State' of the nineteenth century, it does not yet appear to have been successful in Russia. A Roman magistrate, who did not himself believe in the ancient divinities, was not ready to massacre all those who refused for reasons of conscience to perform acts that he himself considered mere legal forms. He might believe the Christians to be misguided visionaries and superstitious zealots, he might be convinced that they were immoral in ordinary life and potential traitors, he might view them with the mingled fear and suspicion with which all governments view the religious fanatic, but still he might hesitate to disturb the peace of his administration, which is always the ideal of an official, by a sanguinary persecution. Brigands were an active nuisance, they disturbed the working of the administration, and they had therefore to be suppressed, but as long as the equally outlawed Christians did not prove themselves as troublesome as the brigands there was a natural reluctance to set the law in motion. Had the Empire adopted and established Mithraism or some other intellectually acceptable religion it might have succeeded in arresting Christianity, but it would then have had to abandon, as it eventually did abandon, the established cults. It could not try to profit by the dissensions within the Church itself, since nearly all the heretical sects were in quite orthodox opposition to official paganism.

The famous Neronian persecution in 65 A.D. was

for nearly three centuries the legal precedent which governed the position of the Christians within the Empire.[1] It is certain that they were not accused of being the incendiaries of Rome, inasmuch as the official explanation of the fire was that it had started accidentally, nor was any special law passed at that or at any other time against Christians as such or against the Christian religion. They were prosecuted on the comprehensive charge of *odium humani generis* on the basis of an *institutum*, an extra-constitutional enactment of the executive or, as we would call it to-day, an Imperial ordinance and police regulation, directed against the three crimes of immorality, sacrilege, and treason. This *institutum* appears to have been originally aimed at the disaffected Roman upper classes, and also at the diffusion of foreign and anti-social ideas and customs; the procedure was extra-legal, and conviction under one of the headings was sufficient to prove the accused guilty of all three crimes. No specific law seems ever to have been passed against Christianity itself. Nero's courts limited themselves to finding the Christians guilty of specified crime and disaffection. The consequence of this decision was that Christianity became a proof of guilt; once a person was proved to be a Christian he was automatically convicted of treason, and after Domitian the observance of the Imperial cult was used as a convenient test to prove Christianity. From Nero to Constantine in law, if not in fact, ' the persecution

[1] See A. Profumo's prolix yet valuable investigation: *Le Fonti ed i tempi dell' incendio Neroniano*, Rome, 1905, pp. 197-353. Cf., however, U. Fracassini: *L'Impero e il Cristianesimo*, Perugia, 1913.

of the Christians was a standing one like that of brigands.'

Nero's reasons for taking so far-reaching an action will always remain obscure. We may assume as fairly certain that the Christians were definitely unpopular. There was a large Jewish colony in the capital, and the permanent anti-Semitic feelings of the populace were further excited by the growing danger of a Jewish war. The Christians would incur the full unpopularity of the Jews, increased still further by their success in proselytizing. On the other hand, it is quite possible that the considerable Jewish influence at court was exerted to the full against their rivals, or that the persecution was one of the moves in Nero's tortuous diplomatic game in Syria and Judea. Nero may, as Tacitus says, have sought by such spectacular means to divert attention from the fire and its consequences and from his own unpopular measures in the capital. He may have been honestly convinced that the new religion was dangerous to the State, and it is more than likely that he was himself a sadist. He must have been tolerably familiar with Christianity since he took an interest in magic and religion, and he may thus have had personal grounds of dislike. The discovery of the Pisonian conspiracy took place just before the persecution of the Christians, and there may have been some relation between the two events.

But from the principate of Nero to that of Severus the Church enjoyed practical toleration, disturbed only by sporadic and usually local outbursts of persecution. Especially after Nerva the dignity of an Empire ruled by philosophers could not descend

to the persecution of opinion as such. The policy of the State, a policy which, though statesmanlike, is quite illogical and hardly legal, is admirably exposed in Trajan's rescript to Pliny. It reaffirms the claim of the State to absolute obedience from all its subjects, but advises that as a matter of policy severe measures should not be taken against a number of people who were only theoretically dangerous. The magistrate should punish those who were duly convicted, but he should first try by all means in his power to make the accused mend their ways; under no circumstances should he make officious inquisition for victims or take any notice of anonymous accusations. Other regulations during the course of the second century threw the onus of proof still further on the prosecution. The accused was given time to prepare his defence, which meant that, if he chose, he could put his affairs in order and remove himself to a place outside the jurisdiction of the court: the accuser had to appear in person and severe penalties were enacted for malicious prosecution. Venal governors would sell certificates of immunity or exemption to rich and pusillanimous Christians. Actions against Roman citizens of standing had to be conducted, at least during the first century, on a more definite charge, which was usually that of 'atheism,' as in the case of Domitian's cousin, Flavius Clemens. But legal and social difficulties rendered such cases extremely rare; there was usually a political or a personal motive behind them. Even though a magistrate might know that a certain man was a Christian, even though that man openly declared his faith,

still the law could not be set in motion except by the direct personal intervention of an accuser.

The Church, on the whole, greatly benefited by this arrangement. It was able to evolve its own hierarchy and system of government without the interfering control of the State. Whatever may have been the Church institutions of the first decades, by the end of the first century we find the ideal of the one monarchical bishop for every see fully developed in the Ignatian epistles. The importance of the See of Rome became greater, and the tendency to refer questions to it for decision became more marked. The extravagance of opposite heresies was mutually destructive, and helped the Church to define its own essential principles. Public discussions and debates with pagans, with heretics and with Jews led to the formation of a dogmatic system which only awaited official and authoritative promulgation. The growing complexity of administration rendered necessary a number of regulations which were later to form the nucleus of canon law, and in the drafting of which it is natural to suppose that Christian lawyers, such as Tertullian and Minucius Felix, took an important part. Of course the public debates might occasionally cause a disturbance of the peace or an outbreak of popular feeling, and then the authorities would feel bound to execute, as an example, a few leading Christians, especially bishops or wealthy laymen, but on the whole the persecutions were just sufficient to maintain Christian solidarity and awaken sympathy for the sufferers.

With the beginning of the third century, the

State found itself unable to continue its policy of contemptuous indifference. The Roman constitution, originally republican, was being transformed into an Oriental autocracy, and the new despotism was faced by the fact that there was a large, rich and powerful organization completely outside any form of State control. At the same time, the pagans, who had been lazily indifferent during the earlier period, were being aroused to resentment, reform and fanaticism. Only two policies were possible: the Church had to be either wiped out by intensive persecution or brought by some means into the new constitution. But the political vicissitudes of the third century rendered a continuous policy impossible; a period of persecution would be followed by one of toleration and friendship. After the failure of the persecution under Decius and Valerian, Gallienus issued an edict, which, although it did not formally repeal the enactments against the Christians, proclaimed practical toleration and recognized the episcopal office. The State was thus obliged to take notice of what took place within the Church itself, and Aurelian, although he seems to have had designs of repealing the edict of Gallienus, executed the sentence of deposition against Paul of Samosata, while later Maxentius, the head of the pagan party, tried to restore peace in the diocese of Rome by expelling the leaders of two rival factions. Diocletian restored order to the Roman Empire and transformed its constitution; but he realized that the Christian Church was the chief obstacle in the way of his new, almost divine, autocracy. One tenth perhaps of the population of the

Empire was by that time Christian, but the army and the peasants were still, to a large extent, attached to the cult of Mithras or to their ancient superstitions. Diocletian and his colleagues owed their elevation to the triumph of these two parties over the urban population. Having settled the most pressing internal and foreign affairs of the Empire, he was able in 303 to attempt the suppression of Christianity. The persecution was thorough and universal, but it came too late, even if it had been guided during its whole course by the genius of its originator. In 305, Diocletian, sick in body and perhaps in mind, like one of the greatest of his successors, abdicated the purple and withdrew to Salona, but he lived to see the failure of his policy in the sanguinary but less capable hands of his imitators, and the final triumph of the new religion.

CHAPTER III

THE PEACE OF CONSTANTINE

Debes incunctanter advertere regiam potestatem tibi non ad solum mundi regimen, sed maxime ad ecclesiae praesidium esse collatam.

S. Leo I, '*Epist.*,' 156, 3.

THE year 313 A.D., in which Constantine promulgated the Edict of Milan, is usually considered the beginning of a new period in the history of the world. For us, living in the twentieth century, the establishment of Christianity remains the cause and origin of our present civilization, which is still fundamentally Christian, although the fact is not always clearly discernible. Many of the problems created by Constantine's action still perplex our sagacity or excite our passions. Even though we may be fully aware of the continuity and longevity of the Roman Empire, we cannot be blamed for an inclination to regard the Christian Empire as an entirely new institution, quite different from that which had ruled the world for nearly four centuries. In the same way, though not to the same extent, we tend to separate the history of the Empire under the Republic from the period inaugurated by Caesar and by Augustus. Yet, from the day that the legions left the plains of Latium to commence the conquest of Italy and of the world, to the Christmas Day of the year 800, when the Roman people legally

conferred the Imperial dignity on a barbarian, the history of the Roman Empire is one harmonious whole, in which every event seems to be the logical, almost necessary, conclusion of what has preceded it.

In judging Constantine's policy by our knowledge of subsequent history, we are exaggerating its effect on contemporaries. They certainly did not realize that it was going to change the history of the world, and it has even been possible for a modern critic to doubt whether the edict was ever issued.[1] The Christian question had been growing in importance all through the course of the third century, and it was obvious that it would have to be settled; Diocletian's serious attempt at persecution had completely failed, and full toleration had been granted by Galerius. Constantine's legislation must have been expected, and was indeed inevitable. Everyone could see that the Galilean had triumphed.

No change so momentous has ever been carried out with fewer difficulties or accepted with less opposition, a fact which not only proves the statesmanship of the Emperor, but also that public opinion was quite ready for the reform, or, as it might be called, the revolution. The structure of the Empire remained intact, and Constantine and his successors did little more than develop and perfect the general policy of Diocletian. The Empire of the fourth century is simply the continuation of that of the third, the natural solution of the various problems which had arisen during that period of transforma-

[1] O. Seeck, *Untergang der antiken Welt*, i. 457; *Zeitsch. f. Kirchengesc*, xii. 181.

tion and unrest. The recognition of Christianity was inevitable, the social, economic, military and administrative reforms were due to Diocletian, the removal of the seat of the Empire to the East was no new idea, and to Constantine himself would only remain the credit of having shown remarkable genius in selecting a site for the new capital.

But Constantine was a statesman, indeed so great a statesman that many modern historians have naively doubted whether his Christianity can have been sincere. Though we may be unwilling to regard him as ' equal to the Apostles,' there is no reason why we should consider him a hypocrite. He gave his children a strictly Christian education, and his memory was execrated by Julian. At first, it is true, he tolerated paganism and merely introduced a system of parity between the old and the new religions, but such a policy was necessary in order that the change should be as gradual as possible. The toleration of paganism was continued by many of his successors, even after the reaction under Julian and the rebellion of Eugenius. The delay of baptism till the approach of death, though reprehended by rigorous divines, was common at the time, and the murder of Crispus can at the most prove him to have been a bad man. His whole policy is best explained by supposing that he was from the outset a convinced, though not a fanatical, Christian. It is true that his conversion strengthened enormously his own personal position, but even so it is hardly fair to attribute it to purely selfish motives. Shall we consider as purely selfish ambition the policy of a Pitt, a Bismarck, a Cavour?

The advantages gained by the State were indeed so great that we may well doubt whether the peace of Constantine was the victory or the defeat of Christianity. The concessions to the Church, that is to say the full benefits of legal recognition and the removal of all temporal disabilities, were such as could hardly have been withheld much longer, while the State obtained that large measure of control in religious affairs which had been the real point at issue since the time of Nero. It is easy for us to-day to declare that it would have been better for the Church not to have accepted these terms, which in the Byzantine, and still more in the Russian empires, eventually caused it to degenerate into a despised, corrupt and ignorant department of the administration. As easy as it would be to criticize the authors of the Enabling Act for not having foreseen the possibility of the Prayer Book controversy. How could the Church have refused Constantine's offer, and, having done so, how could it have maintained its unity? The theological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries were certainly not provoked, though they were sometimes embittered, by the Emperors, whose actions always tended to maintain the unity both of the Church and of the State.

It is still easier to say that it would have been better ' had the Church remained as independent of the State as it had been before Constantine . . . (and had only been granted) the same freedom and privileges which were enjoyed by pagan cults and priesthoods.'[1] This is the ideal of the moderate

[1] Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, London, 1923, i. p. 63.

Liberals of the nineteenth century, the famous ' Lay State,' with its doctrine of '*Libera Chiesa in Libero Stato*,' a free Church in a free State. But we may well question whether this ideal has proved successful in practice; in the officially broadminded and agnostic United States many events, such as the Tennessee evolution trial, the activities of the Ku Klux Klan, the campaign against Al. Smith, suggest the existence of a spirit of religious intolerance and strife far more widespread than in those countries which have an official Church, by law established. In any case, the Lay State may perhaps be feasible at the present day, when the organization and the beliefs of the various religions and denominations have assumed a definite legal form, and when, fortunately or unfortunately, widespread indifference has resulted in widespread toleration. It was quite impossible in the Roman Empire, in which we have already seen the constant and steady growth of religious sentiment. An agnostic State, which would have tried to hold the scales impartially not only between Christianity and paganism, but between the various Christian sects, would have been condemned and attacked by everyone; toleration was a far greater sin than heresy.

And was the Church, before Constantine, really independent of the State, and, if so, could it have continued to remain independent? It was illegal, it was persecuted, it may even have been rebellious and disaffected, but no institution which can count on numerous devoted supporters and on great wealth is ever really independent of the State. Aurelian was asked by the Eastern bishops to expel

Paul of Samosata from his See, and, after hearing the opinion of the Italian bishops, he did so. Maxentius has been condemned as a tyrant and a persecutor because he tried to bring peace to the See of Rome by the thoroughly liberal expedient of expelling both the rival leaders. The chief object of government is to maintain the peace and to protect the life and property of its subjects; government cannot therefore remain indifferent to religion which has always been a chief cause of human strife. Alexandria was one of the most turbulent cities in the world, and Christianity further increased its natural restlessness. Any government would have been bound to interfere eventually, and in interfering it would have had to take sides. It would thus receive the support of at least one party; if it tried to remain impartial it would have been faced by a general insurrection of both. If peace is more likely to be secured by partisanship than by impartiality, Government should be partisan. And this is true not only in regard to religion but in its dealing with any dispute.

The Church had in any case to be allowed to own property and to receive gifts and legacies; but property is second only to religion in its power of causing disturbances. Property leads to litigation, to law-suits, and eventually to the intervention of the executive, which has always the duty to execute the legal judgements. Immediately after the persecution of Diocletian, there were a large number of contested or irregular elections of bishops, and the State was ultimately bound to decide who should take possession of the temporalities of the diocese.

It was generally admitted that a bishop could only be judged by his peers; in cases of contested elections the State had therefore to summon an episcopal synod to decide the matter, though, since the question was not dogmatic, the State could sometimes decide the question itself or appoint a civil magistrate as president. But the defeated party might always, and sometimes with justice, deny the legality of the court or of its procedure, while often, even with the best will in the world, it might be difficult to decide the questions of both law and fact. At the present day, even if a double election to a diocese could take place, the matter would be easily settled according to canon law, but even the Council of Constance found it impossible to determine which of the three rivals was the real Pope.

At the present day all States are constantly obliged to interfere in religious questions, even if they do not want to do so. The British Government in India has rightly pursued as far as possible a policy of religious indifference, but even so it has constantly to interfere in religious matters. It prohibits *suttee;* it is forced to determine questions of religious property which often give rise to political disturbances; it tries to hold the scales impartially between Hindu and Moslem, and is considered oppressive by both. In Palestine the Turkish Government attempted to preserve the peace impartially between the warring creeds and one of the results was the Crimean War. The British effort has been attended by a greater measure of administrative success, but the difficulties are permanent.

Even the most tolerant or agnostic government may find itself obliged to persecute Mormons or Dukhobors.

To suggest that the State could have granted the Church the same rights and privileges which were enjoyed by the pagan cults is to misunderstand the whole position. The State was never called upon to interfere in the official cults because, since no one took them seriously, they were no danger to the peace of the Empire. A quarrel between the Salii and the Flamines was not likely to set Rome on fire, either metaphorically or literally. Confraternities like the Arval brethren were little more than social clubs, and even so were absolutely under the control of the executive. The rapidity with which paganism disappeared proves that it was generally regarded with indifference. Ammianus Marcellinus is openly a pagan; Ausonius, Claudian, even Procopius, are probably pagan at heart, but none would have been ready to suffer martyrdom.

The State was not, however, able to assume the same control of Christianity which it had exercised over paganism. Even though the court ceremonial became more and more elaborate, the Emperor was not, and could not, be worshipped in person. After death nearly all the pagan Emperors had almost automatically taken their seat in the national Pantheon, but the Christian Emperors seldom received even those posthumous honours which could be granted by the Church. Except for the regrettable but comprehensible exaltation of St Constantine and St Charles the Great and the more regular cult of St Henry II, the calendar is happily

devoid of Imperial saints. The executive received of course the support of the religion, and the person of the Emperor was, as it had been in pagan times, 'sacrosanct,' but the almost mystical idea of the 'Sacred Caesarian Majesty' is one of the new developments of the Middle Ages. Even when the Eastern Empire had become completely orientalized, when the policy of 'Caesaropapism' had rendered the crown supreme even in ecclesiastical matters, the Roman Emperor never became a Caliph. The ghost of the Republic was never entirely exorcized. The Empire was elective, and the Emperor reigned only with the consent of his subjects, who always retained their constitutional right to depose him by a revolution. He was bound by the laws, except in so far as he was granted legal dispensation by the Senate. These principles were often, and at times constantly, disregarded in practice, but were never abandoned in theory: the doctrine of Divine Right has no foundation either in the Empire or in the Church. We shall see how that doctrine, equally harmful to mankind and to Christianity, grew up in the West with the new feudal civilization; but its worst form could be seen in the East, where the Muscovite Empire, Slav and barbarian, in imitating the outward forms of the Byzantine autocracy, failed to understand and adopt its legal and constitutional ideas.

The chief characteristic of the ancient Roman administration was the union of civil, military and even religious offices. A proconsul was, in his own province, supreme in all affairs. A consul was a magistrate, a priest and a general. The system was

by no means a good one; some of the greatest disasters that overtook the Roman arms were due to its having raised dangerous demagogues or able politicians and financiers to supreme military command. It might place at the head of the State a man like Marius who, though an able soldier, was destitute of any political understanding. Again, with puckish humour, it would make a Pontifex Maximus of Julius Cæsar. Indeed, it is no small proof of the intrinsic unreasonableness of human affairs that a system so illogical in theory was able to work at all in practice. Under the principate the growth of centralization and consequently of a highly organized bureaucracy rendered specialization inevitable, and one of the chief features of the reforms of Diocletian was the separation of the military and the civil offices, and the subdivision of the latter into a number of autonomous departments. It was therefore easy to incorporate the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the machinery of the State and to develop it on similar lines. The sees were distributed as far as possible according to the administrative divisions of the Empire, and the salutary principle that ecclesiastical and political geography should on the whole coincide has been maintained ever since.

At the summit of the whole bureaucratic edifice was the Emperor, who was consequently the head of the Church in so far as it was part of the administration. But his power over it was never absolute; he could never become Pontifex Maximus. The converse was also true; a priest could not become an emperor. The Emperor was thus able to employ

ecclesiastics on important missions that for one reason or another could not have been safely entrusted to a general or an official. However much a Patriarch might intrigue, he could never become a personal rival. It was frequently useful in constitutional difficulties to be able to dispose of persons who, while technically subjects, were neither a cause of suspicion for the sovereign nor of jealousy for the great officials. Thus the Emperor could be crowned by the Patriarch and yet not feel that he had received his crown from a subject.

The seven gradations of the hierarchy formed, it is true, a kind of parallel to the various grades in the civil service, but the Emperor, although he could make use of much moral pressure, could never control the hierarchy in the same way as he controlled the civil and military careers. The free election of the bishops was always preserved in theory, and even in practice a bishop could not be imposed on a hostile city. The constitutional position is well defined by Honorius in a letter to his brother Arcadius: 'The interpretation of Divine Things concerns Churchmen, the observation of religion concerns the Emperors.' An Emperor is not entitled to interfere in dogmatic questions, but is bound to ensure the proper and peaceful exercise of religion; he can interfere in matters of discipline and he is obliged to enforce the canonical decrees of legitimate councils. The Emperor is the custodian of the unity of the Empire, and consequently of Christianity, and he has thus the right to take any steps which he may consider necessary to preserve that unity. In extreme cases he may compel the Church to

decide, by means of a general council, any question likely to disturb the spiritual or temporal peace of the Romans.

Spiritual unity in the Christian faith was as necessary to the Empire as political unity within its frontiers; a province which had lapsed into heresy was as much lost to the Roman polity as if it had been conquered by the barbarians. And the duty of the government to maintain this unity led inevitably to persecution as a duty of the civil magistrate. In this matter the Imperial policy seems to have been more concerned with practical consequences than with theoretic consistency, at least till the time of Justinian. Pagans were allowed practical toleration and continued to be employed in the highest administrative posts, even after Julian's attempt at reaction. The rapid collapse of the revolt of Eugenius, though it led to a greater severity towards pagan cults, showed that there was nothing to be feared from that side. In country districts paganism continued to linger for a considerable time, but the government showed great reluctance to interfere as long as the people did not cause any trouble and paid their taxes promptly. But heresy had to be punished more vigorously. The most serious was the schism of the Donatists in Africa, which was peculiarly a matter for the temporal power since it originated from a dispute not about dogma but about discipline, a double election to the Church in Carthage. The schismatics obtained the support of organized brigands, and upheld their opinions with more than theological zeal. Even in this extreme case the penalties, though severe,

stopped short of death, a punishment reserved for the Manichaeans alone.

Some modern historians have praised the humanity of the Roman Empire, which did not pursue the heretic with fire and sword. But it is difficult to establish a real moral distinction between different forms of persecution; if persecution is wrong, it is only a matter of degree whether the means are civil disabilities, or penal laws, or torture and death. We might as well praise the humanity of Basil II, who was content with blinding his Bulgarian captives instead of impaling or crucifying them. If on the other hand it is the business of the civil magistrate to secure and enforce religious conformity, the choice of means becomes merely a question of political expediency. Chrysostom declares that heretics should be silenced but not put to death, as though he did not realize that death is the only perfect silencer. Certainly, as Arcadius and Eudoxia found out to their cost, only death could silence Chrysostom himself. The Imperial system of prudent persecution by means of civil and legal disabilities proved successful in dealing with the Arians, the Nestorians and even, to a certain extent, with the Donatists. It failed completely when directed against the Egyptian monophysites, and it is not impossible that the Empire might have retained Egypt had it exterminated the heretics.

The importance of the actual gifts which the Church, especially the Church of Rome, received from Constantine and his successors has been much exaggerated. The donation of Constantine is no doubt very imposing on paper, but it is probable

that the Imperial finances did not suffer very much by his generosity. The *Patrimonium Caesaris*, the private estates of the Crown, had grown up during the course of the Empire, partly by acquisition and legacies and partly by confiscation. By the end of the third century the Emperor was by far the greatest landed proprietor in Italy, and nearly all the territory round Rome was in his hands. These vast estates or *latifundia* were economically unsound, and must have been expensive to manage. Rural conditions were so bad that a serious reform and decentralization was absolutely necessary, and Constantine tried to solve the problem by granting a considerable portion of the Crown lands to the Church of Rome and its chief basilicas or to rural dioceses. He could not realize that by so doing he was laying the foundation of the Temporal Power of the Popes; he only saw the possibility of performing a meritorious action at little expense to himself and to the great advantage of the economy of the Empire. The administration of the Patrimonium continued to be secular; though it preserved all the privileges and immunities it had possessed as Imperial property, it did not acquire a religious character. The names of its various subdivisions remained topographical; the term ' Patrimony of St Peter ' and the implications connected with it are a later development of the Middle Ages. Under the administration of the Church the conditions of the Campagna were immensely improved. This recovery was also due in part to the decline of trade which brought about a natural protection of Italian agriculture. Notwithstanding the removal

of the seat of government to Constantinople, Milan or Ravenna, the prosperity of Rome and the Campagna continued to increase, and was not seriously affected by the barbarian invasions. The ruin of the Italian economy was due to the Gothic wars.

But the Church, in becoming the greatest landed proprietor in the Empire, was entering into new and peculiar relations with the temporal power. The Christian Churches, like the pagan temples, were exempt from taxation and had the right of asylum. Could the same privileges be extended to the unconsecrated estates and properties, the revenues from which might be used for purposes only remotely connected with religion? One of the most important declarations on this subject is that of St Ambrose. The Bishop of Milan, in opposing the effort of Valentinian to obtain the grant of a Milanese church for the use of Arians, rejects the principle that the Emperor, having power over all things, has the power to dispose of everything at his pleasure. He admits that the estates of the Church belong ultimately to the Emperor, who has the right to seize them should he think fit, but the churches themselves belong to God and are thus outside the power of the temporal government. The churches indeed are exempt from taxes, but the estates of the Church, like the Imperial estates themselves, have to pay the *annona*.

St Ambrose's logic does not seem to be altogether clear. It is difficult to understand why one class of ecclesiastical property should be differentiated from another. If the House of God does not belong to the Emperor but to God in person, why should He

not have the estates, the revenues from which may be used to keep His house in repair, to celebrate His worship, or even to accomplish those works of charity which He commends and commands? The principle successfully affirmed by St Ambrose must necessarily result in the political doctrine of Gregory VII.

The most pleasing feature in the Christian establishment is its effect on the condition of the common people. The triumph of absolutism and the practical abrogation of all personal or municipal liberties were accompanied by the establishment of a body which was, and still is, democratic in sentiment if not in organization. The bishop became the protector of the people in his diocese; he often attempted with success to correct cases of maladministration or oppression, and voiced the complaints of the people even before the throne of Caesar. The power of the Church was rooted in democracy, and was never greater or more pleasing to witness than when it was justly opposed to arbitrary power. Its wealth was freely used to succour the poor and indigent, nor can it be accused of pauperizing the people since it only attempted to relieve distress for which the misgovernment of the State was responsible. The priests and bishops gradually assumed, though without any legal title, nearly all the powers and obligations of the old municipal magistracies and became the real 'defenders of the city.' Their sacred character allowed them to enjoy a liberty of speech that frequently bordered on licence. Chrysostom's denunciations of the vices and luxury of the rich and powerful often sound like a Socialist

harangue of the present day and, though they can hardly be used as evidence of the real social conditions, show how the Church was ready to champion the cause of the humble and the oppressed. The language used to describe the government is sometimes sheer invective. Even Victor Hugo would hardly have described the Empress Eugenie as Jezebel or Herodias, two favourite ecclesiastical epithets for unpopular, though perhaps perfectly virtuous, Empresses.

Christian democracy is founded on the supreme importance of the individual soul: the salvation of the slave is as important as that of the Emperor. It is not a political scheme of government since salvation must be achieved by the individual, not by the State; a good Christian can prepare himself for the future life in any station or under any form of government. The discomforts of our transient existence on earth will be more than counterbalanced by the perpetual joys of Paradise. A Christian is therefore fundamentally indifferent to all forms of government, and is bound to obey the commands of all constituted authorities as long as they are not actually in conflict with the commands of God. It is really no business of the Church to interfere if the citizens of Rome are oppressed; its business is to help them to become citizens of the City of God. Thus the gradual abolition of slavery is due far more to economic causes than to the influence of Christianity, but Christian individualism was and is for ever opposed to all absolutist conceptions of the State. Diocletian attempted to fix all men in hereditary castes, to bind the peasants to their land,

the townsmen to their cities, the merchants to their commerce. The failure of his reforms is greatly due to the vigour with which the Church asserted the freedom of the individual. The Church, militant on earth, was naturally and inevitably opposed to any static conception of society. It was bound to combat any form of government which tended to restrict the personal freedom of the individual in so far as such freedom was necessary in order that he might prepare for the future life. Had it been possible to transform the Christian priesthood into a hereditary caste the course of history would have been changed, but the ideals of asceticism and of the celibacy of the higher clergy rendered an episcopal dynasty not only impossible but inconceivable. The Church was obliged to replenish its ranks from the other classes of society, and it could never admit the right of the State to prohibit the members of any class from taking orders or from embracing the monastic life. It thus drained the Empire of many of its best forces which might have been more fruitfully employed in a secular capacity, but this was the inevitable result of the policy of the State, which rendered the discomforts and renunciations of a clerical or an ascetic life infinitely preferable to the terrible existence of the ordinary citizen. The most valuable recruits were drawn from the municipal middle classes, which had proved their ability under the old Empire, and whose life had been rendered intolerable by Diocletian's reforms. Men of ability or ambition were naturally attracted to the Church, the only career open to individual genius.

AN APOSTLE (ST. PETER?)

From the fresco in the Hypogeum of the Aurelii, gnostic Christians of the time of Severus
(*Monumenti Antichi XXVIII*, 1922, *Pl. III*)

CHAPTER IV

THE ROMAN PRIMACY

Isti (SS. Petrus et Paulus) sunt qui te ad hanc gloriam provexerunt, ut gens sancta, populus electus, civitas sacerdotalis et regia, per sacram B. Petri Sedem caput orbis effecta latius praesideres religione divina quam dominatione terrena.

S. Leo I, Sermo 80 (83), 1.

ROUND that portion of the heavens that the genius of Michelangelo has enclosed above the dust of a Galilean fisherman the words of the Gospel of St Matthew are written in letters of gold: *Tu es Petrus et super hanc Petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam.* No other phrase has more greatly influenced the course of human history, no other pun has affected the lives of sixty generations. Perhaps a philosophic Oriental, who had adopted Western curiosity and method without losing his native detachment, might be able to write an impartial history of the Roman Primacy; no European however learned, however agnostic, however conscientious, can ever hope to emancipate himself fully from the partisan and conflicting tendencies which have governed his education and still encompass his maturity. Our whole civilization has been created by the Catholic Church and by the reactions against it. We cannot judge Manlius in sight of the Capitol; we cannot judge the Roman Primacy with that same judicial detachment with which we can study the disputes between

Shiite and Sunnite; it stands too firmly on one side of the eternal argument in our mind between authority and intellect, the supernatural and the reasonable, the transcendent and the immanent.

Having traced the growth of Christianity and the efforts by which the State attempted to gain control of this new force which had come into the world, I must now turn to the means by which God preserved the spiritual independence of His Church. As a Catholic, I shall not even pretend to be impartial; I accept without reserve the definitions and the implications of the Vatican Council.

In discussing any dogma—and the Primacy of Rome is one of the chief Catholic dogmas—we can distinguish between the dogmatic definition itself and the external circumstances by which it was prepared and accompanied. The former, inasmuch as it defines a question which is by its nature beyond and above the human understanding, cannot be questioned or discussed; the latter, on the other hand, are within the competence of historical criticism. The Truth itself is absolute, but we are quite entitled to study the means by which it has in the end prevailed. We shall find that these means have been sometimes clear and unswerving, sometimes strangely tortuous, sometimes spiritual and intellectual, sometimes political and utilitarian. The fact that the establishment of Truth was sometimes due to bad or even false reasons does not invalidate the Truth itself; the falsity of the Donation of Constantine or of the Isidorian Decretals does not impair the doctrines which those documents were used to support. It is thus of the greatest interest to

follow the gradual unveiling of a Truth; it is at first sensed almost subconsciously, it is later perceived as through a glass, darkly, then, through the labours and the attention of many generations, it is studied, limited and defined, till at last it emerges in the full brilliance of a dogmatic definition. The Truth, revealed in its radiant nudity, is then ready to be decently clothed by diligent commentators, who, it must be confessed, are sometimes inclined to smother it under the weight of their changing fashions. The Church received from Christ, its founder, the whole body of revealed Truth, but only gradually, during the course of its long history, has it appraised the various items of its legacy. This process of evolution is constant and can never be final; in the course of the next twenty centuries the doctrine of the Vatican Council may be still further defined and supplemented.

The Primacy of the See of Rome—Papal Infallibility does not yet concern us—is based on certain dogmatic postulates which can only be stated, for they cannot be satisfactorily discussed. As Catholics we believe that Our Lord gave a Primacy to St Peter, that St Peter became Bishop of Rome, that he transmitted this Primacy to all his successors.[1] These principles are matters of faith, not of reason; we believe them on the authority of the Church, of which Christ is the head. Our belief is quite independent of historical evidence, which, however, such as it is, appears to us to support our belief. But should it seem to be opposed

[1] See the admirably concise though polemical essays by Adrian Fortescue, *The Early Papacy*, 1920.

to the evidence, we would unhesitatingly reject the evidence rather than abandon the dogma. It is therefore impossible to discuss the dogma of the Roman Primacy from an historical standpoint.

It is based on the famous promise to Peter which is to be found in Matthew's Gospel alone. Any discussion as to the composition and language of this Gospel, any enquiry as to why Christ's words have not been preserved by other evangelists[1] or as to what they may mean, is entirely beside the point. We believe that the words were spoken on the authority of the Catholic Church, and we consequently accept the interpretation which the same authority has placed on them. 'We hold them to be true because they are inspired, and we hold them to be inspired because the Church guarantees them as such.'[2] No new discovery of history or criticism can shake our conviction on this point.

The presence and martyrdom of St Peter in Rome is on the other hand a definitely historical question, and in this case the evidence is so strong that all serious critics of every denomination agree in considering it a fact. It is true that there is no contemporary evidence, but the traditional and circumstantial evidence is so overwhelming and so consistent that its rejection would cause far greater historical difficulties. If historical certitude is to be limited to what may be proved by witnesses at first

[1] See, however, Batiffol, *L'Eglise naissante*, p. 94. Prof. Turner's suggestion that the promise to Peter may have dropped out from the end of Mark is very ingenious, *New Commentary on Holy Scripture, including the Apocrypha*, 1928, p. 124.

[2] Batiffol, *The Credibility of the Gospel*, London, 1912, p. 156, where, however, he uses the sentence about passages of the Fourth Gospel.

hand an incalculable number of historical facts would have to be abandoned, including the history of the second Punic war. Every new discovery confirms the tradition, while there is no evidence against it. If St Peter did not come to Rome the Gospel of Mark becomes inexplicable. That Gospel was certainly written in Rome, it was certainly written after Nero's persecution, and it certainly reflects the teaching of an eye-witness. The traditional representations of both Peter and Paul are to the highest degree characteristic portraiture, and must derive from contemporary representations.

Finally, the Apostolic Succession is a subject which it is impossible to prove or to disprove historically, but we again accept the tradition of the very earliest Church without the slightest hesitation.

The Primacy of St Peter and its transmission to all subsequent Roman bishops was from the first the only theological foundation of the Primacy of the Roman See and of the Papal claims. The exceptional position which Rome enjoyed in the eyes of the world was, however, due to many other reasons. The subtle niceties of dogmatic theology have seldom appealed to the common people, who, indeed, are not usually in a position to understand them. The populace wishes to have its dogmas in a palpable and material form; the gravest heresy may slumber in a cloister or be buried under the oppressive weight of countless folios until an addition to a popular hymn or a slight change in a liturgy provokes a serious riot and perhaps a revolution. Rome, in the eyes of the Christian world, was something even greater than the See of St Peter.

It was the capital and the heart of the Empire, and though certain rigorists might consider it the New Babylon, for the majority of the people it was the microcosm of the world and the visible symbol of Roman unity. It was the scene of the martyrdom of Peter and of Paul, the greatest of the Apostles, and their relics could still be venerated, while the sites connected with their history were already, during the course of the third century, the objects of pilgrimage and cult, as we know from recent excavations in Rome.[1] It was still the Pagan City, but its guilt had been more than washed away by the blood of countless martyrs. The Church of Rome had been one of the most sorely tried during the periods of persecution, and its faith had emerged triumphant. We can conjecture that, during the periods of toleration, there must have been a certain amount of contact between Christianity and the Imperial Government, and in any negotiations the Church of Rome would have had, on account of its position, a very considerable influence. When, after the Antonines, the Empire was internationalized and its frontiers began to be shaken by the immigration of new peoples, the city of Rome became, in the eyes of both the barbarian and the Roman peoples, more than a geographical capital; it became the outward sign of Roman civilization. As its political importance waned its mystical value as a social and religious symbol steadily increased; Rome, in relinquishing her terrestrial crown, assumed one that was immortal and celestial.

[1] See H. Lietzmann (a Protestant), *Petrus und Paulus in Rom*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1927, with an appendix by v. Gerkan on the excavations at S. Sebastiano.

It was a frequently repeated maxim of the theologians that the size and political importance of a city has nothing to do with its ecclesiastical rank.[1] This, of course, was quite true in theory, but in practice secular considerations naturally exerted a preponderant influence. By the fourth century five Sees were pre-eminent above all the rest—Rome, Alexandria, Constantinople, Antioch, and Jerusalem—to which should be added the autocephalous Church of Cyprus. Both Jerusalem and Cyprus soon lost their importance though not their dignity; the remaining four Patriarchates represented the four largest and richest cities in the later Empire. Antioch was, of course, of Apostolic foundation, and its dignity was used to support the claims of the Roman See, but it is curious to note that Alexandria, which had been founded by Peter's disciple Mark, was from the Roman point of view the second See in the Empire. Rome always refused to recognize the canons of the various Eastern councils which supported the claim of Constantinople to the second place in Christendom, and justly, since it was not even of Apostolic foundation, and its dignity was merely due to the fact that it was the New Rome. If the famous maxim *Ubi Caesar, ibi Roma* might be true in politics, and even that is doubtful since neither Milan nor Ravenna ever enjoyed the glory of the Eternal City, the same principle could not be applied to ecclesiastical affairs. Rome was Peter and Peter was Rome; the dignity belonged to the See, not to the City.

[1] Cf. Battifol, *Paix Constantinienne*, p. 419, and E. v. Dobschütz, *Decretum Gelasianum* (1912), p. 252.

New Rome could lay claim only to the political, not to the spiritual, succession. Old Rome eventually had to recognize that in fact, if not in theory, Constantinople was the second See, and thus admit that due respect had to be paid to political considerations. Alexandria soon fell into heresy and schism, Antioch lost its importance with the economic decadence of Asia Minor, and Constantinople more and more became the chief representative of Eastern Christianity. The change in the social and economic conditions of the ancient world led inevitably to the decay of the chief Sees of Apostolic times, and to the rise of new Churches of the greatest importance in cities which had received Christianity at a much later date. Rome itself survived only on account of its symbolic value. We shall find much the same state of things in Europe at the close of the eighteenth century, and the problem was then solved by radical and almost revolutionary means. The decline of the ancient civilization and the evolution of the new was fortunately slow; changes in the constitution were not made, they happened. The landmarks by which we steer our way through the complicated history of this period do not usually mark any definite change, but are simply the result of an earlier condition of things which had to be recognized and ratified.

Rome was, of course, the undisputed ecclesiastical Metropolis of the West, having under her Italy, a considerable portion of the Balkan peninsula, including Greece proper, Gaul, Spain and Africa. This arrangement was greatly favoured by the political vicissitudes of the Empire. After the division

of the Empire had become normal, each of the two Emperors naturally sought to increase the centralization of his own portion, and to this motive is due some of the administrative power of Rome and the rise of Constantinople. As the effective power of the Western Emperor decreased under the attacks of the barbarians, the rulers tried to increase by every means the ecclesiastical subordination of the lost provinces; so long as they were Roman religiously, there was some hope of recovering them politically. Thus we find that the territory subject to the immediate jurisdiction of the Pope is that of the first division of the Empire, when the Prefecture of Illyricum, including Greece proper and the central and western portion of the Balkan peninsula, belonged to the Western Empire. In 379 the Emperor Gratian surrendered it to his colleague Theodosius and the Save became the frontier between the two halves of the Empire. The Papal authority, however, was left unchanged and was represented by a Papal vicar; Justinian divided the Prefecture in two parts, and then the Pope had two vicars instead of one. The point is important as showing that already in the first half of the fourth century Rome exercised a definite jurisdiction over Illyricum. Rome, however, never claimed to supersede the synods of the provincial Churches, which were sometimes, as in Africa, almost independent.

It is a mistake frequently made by those non-Catholics who admit the existence of the early Primacy to consider it merely a ' primacy of honour'; a bad modern translation of a phrase to be found in the acts of the very anti-Roman Council of Con-

stantinople in 381. The third canon of that Council declares that Constantinople, inasmuch as it is the New Rome, has the primacy of honour after Rome. The Council here is obviously defining the position of Constantinople, not that of Rome. Rome had, it is true, this primacy of honour, but it had also a great deal more. The Council does not discuss the question of jurisdiction, and its canon is the first attempt to raise the position of the See of Constantinople, which, considering its modernity, had to move very cautiously in order not to offend the legitimate susceptibilities of the older Churches of the Orient. In 381 the Council decided to grant it, for political considerations, an honorary rank; it soon set about acquiring its own jurisdiction. Thus the phrase has no real bearing on the nature of the Papal claims and jurisdiction. It seems certain that, from the very earliest times, Rome enjoyed far more than 'a primacy of honour'; the practice of referring obscure points of doctrine or discipline to Rome appears to be a very ancient one, and sometimes Rome seems to have interfered, gratuitously and uninvited, in the internal affairs of another See. It would be a waste of time to examine in detail the various and very well-known passages of the Fathers,[1] especially since they can usually be interpreted to suit the interpreter. They are either accused of intemperate rhetoric, or endowed with an almost supernatural knowledge of the smallest minutiae of the modern doctrine. The famous Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians is, however,

[1] They are collected and examined by Fortescue, *op. cit.* See also on St Cyprian, J. Chapman, O.S.B., *Studies on the Early Papacy*, 1928, pp. 28 ff.

in a class apart. It is one of our earliest Christian documents, since it is certainly not later than 96 A.D. Both the Eastern and the Western Churches have always considered it very highly; it used to be publicly read in the churches, and it was nearly included in the Canon of the Scriptures. It is direct evidence on our subject since it is an actual document of Roman jurisdiction. We do not know the details of the controversy, except in so far as we can gather them from the letter itself, from which it appears that certain presbyters had been deposed and others uncanonically elected. The document, although there is little reason to doubt that it was really composed by Pope Clement, to whom it has been traditionally ascribed, is ostensibly a collective letter of the Church in Rome to the Church in Corinth. The intervention of the Roman Church in the dispute appears to have been quite gratuitous; at least there is no sign that it is an answer to a definite legal appeal from either or both of the rival parties. Rome acts upon 'tidings,' *ἀκοή* (47, 7), which it has received and excuses itself for not having written before. It asserts that Christ speaks through it (49, 1), and sends 'faithful and wise men who have lived without blame among us from youth to old age to be witnesses between you and us' (43, 4). The general tone of the Epistle is hortatory and admonitory; it does not enter into questions of detail and does not advance any definite claims. This is one of its chief merits, since nearly all subsequent evidence is somewhat vitiated by the desire to prove a thesis. The Early Fathers in particular have nearly always their own axe to grind; they

extol the position of the Roman See when they expect it to agree with them and depreciate it when it does not. On the other hand, the Clementine Epistle seems to me to prove beyond doubt that in the first century the Apostolic Church of Corinth recognized the right of Rome to send what we should now call 'legates *a latere*' to conduct an inquiry into its affairs and to pronounce judgement on them.

The Roman Primacy was thus far more than a mere honorary Primacy, but it was certainly not a Constitutional Primacy, as has been sometimes alleged. That adjective could be better applied to the present Papacy, the powers of which, though extensive, are definitely limited both by law and by custom. The ecclesiastical troubles of the first four centuries were chiefly due to the lack of any constitution whatsoever. The Popes might advance the most extravagant claims and the provincial Churches might or might not accept them. It was only in the fourth century that the Council of Sardica, 'to honour the memory of the Apostle Peter,' formally allowed any bishop to appeal to the Pope, and that Valentinian I and Gratian legally recognized the right of appeal to the Pope from any decision of a provincial Synod. Even after these enactments the position continued to be very obscure. The decrees of the Council of Sardica merely put into words what had been a usual but not a universal practice; they were not accepted by the East with any enthusiasm, and their credit was not increased by the regrettable habit of the Popes of using them in controversy as though they were

the Canons of Nicea. On the other hand, the laws of the Western Emperors were really effective only in the West, and no attempt seems to have been made at any time to enforce them even there, especially as in a very short time most of the provinces were completely outside the practical jurisdiction of the Western Emperor. A considerable number of cases were certainly referred to Rome, but an equally considerable number were not so referred; some Churches, such as the African, sought to remain as autonomous as possible. The Popes themselves had no definite policy, some tried to take too much upon themselves and received sharp rebuffs, but the majority were wisely content to increase their power slowly and cautiously. The Eastern bishops appealed to Rome only for personal reasons; like the Italian princes of the Renaissance, they were all too ready to call upon foreign aid in their own domestic disputes.[1] They were inclined to consider Rome as merely the Metropolitan See of the West, without which there can be no unity or Catholicity, but whose authority in the Orient was the unfortunate result of the prevalent theological anarchy. We can thus, I think, conclude that by the fourth century the See of Rome enjoyed not only a universally recognized precedence over all other Churches but also a considerable but ill-defined measure of effective authority. To identify this authority with a definite episcopal jurisdiction in the modern sense is to go much too far; no one at that time had or could have

[1] See, however, P. Batiffol in *Rev. d'Histoire Ecclesiastique*, xxi, pp. 5 ff.

had any exact idea of the rights and limitations of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and jurisprudence.

We have already seen how the lack of a standard of orthodoxy was one of the chief difficulties of the Early Church. The only real test was that of intercommunion between the various Churches and, above all, with the See of Rome. Whatever its legal powers might be, it was recognized as the first Church in Christendom, which ruled in the heart of the Empire, which had received the faith from the two Princes of the Apostles, where the glorious trophies of countless martyrs could still be venerated. Those who were not in communion with Rome were presumably heretics or schismatics, and equally so those in communion with Rome were presumably orthodox until the contrary was proved. By the fourth and fifth centuries it was generally recognized that exclusion from Roman communion was equivalent to exclusion from Catholic communion.[1] Provincial Churches, and even private individuals, naturally retained their right to explain to the Pope why he should exclude certain persons, like Caelestius and Pelagius, or restore others, like Meletius of Antioch. Of course the justice of these decisions might sometimes be questioned, but not their practical effects. The general complaint in the non-Egyptian Orient was that the West, and especially Rome, did not and would not understand the situation. They were often right, and it was therefore natural that when, as at the Council of Constantinople in 381, Imperial authority managed

[1] Letter of Pope Boniface, Ep. 14, *PL.* xx, 777. Cf. Babut, *Le Concile de Turin*, p. 75.

to pacify for a time the wrangling sects, no one troubled about the West, and some attempts were made to diminish the authority of Rome and Alexandria. But even after that most anti-Roman Council it was necessary to obtain the communion of Rome for the new Patriarch of Constantinople. The Roman communion was the definite proof of universal orthodoxy.

As Rome was the model of the Universal Church, the *οἰκουμένη*, Rome was naturally consulted on doubtful questions both of faith and of discipline. In their answers to such questions the Popes would lay down certain principles which, though not legally binding, carried great moral weight. These responses, later known as Decretals, together with the Canons of the various Councils, gradually led to the formation of a Body of Canon Law. Our earliest Decretals are of the middle of the fourth century, but there is no reason to suppose that the practice was then a new one. At a very early date certain provincial Churches, but not Rome, began to forge Papal Decretals to support certain ideas of their own, usually favourable to Roman jurisdiction. The practice is no doubt reprehensible, but it proves the importance generally attributed to these responses.

All Catholics believe that the Divine Providence will prevent any Pope from teaching error *ex cathedra* in such a way as to make it binding on the Universal Church, but it is too much to expect it to endow every Pope with great intelligence. It is perfectly obvious that in many cases the Popes were badly informed or were quite unable to understand the

questions submitted to them. The fact that, in these circumstances, they managed to avoid theological error is the best proof of the Divine guidance. Pope Zosimus was obviously ignorant of the Pelagian doctrines which he tentatively approved in 417, but God saw to it that he should change his mind and condemn them the following year. We can sympathize with Pope Celestine for not understanding the exact issue with Nestorius; it is probable that, even at that time, no one was able to tell whether Nestorius was really a Nestorian. It is, however, certain that the doctrines condemned by Celestine were heretical, whether they were or not held by Nestorius himself. It has even been argued with considerable show of reason that the famous Dogmatic Epistle of Pope Leo was quite beside the point, in that it simply affirmed the union of the two natures without explaining *how* such a union could have taken place.[1] The object of the Pope, however, was to define the truth, not to embark on an abstruse metaphysical discussion.

The dignity of the Apostolic See was greatly increased by the fact that, in the theological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries, it was always on the right side. In rightly attributing this miracle to the Divine guidance of the successors of St Peter, we should not omit to remember with gratitude the decent rigidity of the Latin language. During the first century Greek was certainly the language of the Christians in Rome, but, as the number of proselytes increased, the Church adopted the common language of the Western half of the

[1] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, iv, 207.

Empire. The dogmatic errors which the East produced with such unwholesome frequency were, to a large extent, true idols of the market-place. In the theological 'Bazaar,' as Nestorius would have called it, Latin may be considered the metallic and Greek the fiduciary currency. The one is more suited to the common transactions of everyday life, stands better the rough and tumble of daily usage and, though heavy and inconvenient, is sure and constant. The other is more pliable, it has a far wider range, and is indispensable for any vast and splendid transactions, but its very convenience may lead the unwary to unjustifiable speculations which may end in intellectual bankruptcy. The East was obliged to call upon Rome for help to check its inflation and stabilize its ideas. Rome was fortunately quite unable to translate the differences between the homoousios and the homoiousios, between the anomoeans and the homoeans, between all the various semi-Arian sects, between the eighteen different creeds which had been set up against the Nicene. This ignorance was occasionally inconvenient, as at Rimini where the Western Bishops approved by mistake doctrines which they detested, and the world found out, much to its surprise, that it had become Arian overnight. Usually, however, the West was inclined to judge not so much the verbal expressions of certain doctrines but rather their logical conclusions. Rome might not be able to understand fully the actual controversy over the famous diphthong, but it rightly saw the serious consequences that would follow any rejection of the Nicene Council. Thus, though Nestorius might

not be a Nestorian, his doctrines could certainly lead to heresy.

The union of orthodox Christianity round the Apostolic See was the chief obstacle in the way of the extension of Imperial control over the whole Church. Every bishop could appeal to Rome and Rome could come to his help with the support of all orthodox Christianity. The strength of Rome was all the greater when a very large portion of Christendom was no longer under the effective temporal control of the Roman Emperor, and it was therefore natural that when the Imperial power became supreme in Eastern ecclesiastical affairs the East separated from the rest of Christianity.

There was, however, another question which, though not at that time of any great importance, was to have the greatest influence on the future relations between Church and State. The question was curiously enough not raised by Rome but by Milan. We have already seen how St Ambrose's ideas on the subject of Church property anticipate those of the Middle Ages, we must now study his conception of the personal relations between the priest and the ruler. The position of the Emperor within the Church was distinctly ambiguous. Though a sovereign, he was a subject. He might claim the right to legislate on questions not only of discipline but of dogma, but he could never pretend to exercise sacerdotal powers in person. He had always to remain a layman, and as such he was naturally liable to ecclesiastical censures and punishments. He might be in practice above the laws of the State, he might claim, like Sigismund, to be

above those of grammar, but he could not be above the laws of God.

The conflict between St Ambrose and Theodosius the Great is well known, but its importance is such that it deserves more than a passing mention. The great city of Thessalonica had been for some time disaffected, probably on account of the large garrisons of barbarian soldiers that were quartered on all the most important towns in the East. In 390 the arrest of a favourite charioteer brought this general discontent to a head, and in the subsequent tumult the barbarian *magister militum*, one of the chief officials in Greece, was torn to pieces by the mob. Theodosius was furious, and replied to the insult offered to the Caesarian majesty by ordering a general massacre of the unsuspecting population during a gathering in the Hippodrome. Even if the lowest estimate of 7,000 slain is probably exaggerated, the deed was, for those times, sufficiently horrible, and the news produced a great impression in Milan, where Ambrose was presiding over an assembly of Gallic bishops.

The Bishop of Milan acted with energy, but also with circumspection. On the Emperor's approach he withdrew to the country, and from there wrote a somewhat verbose letter, in which he respectfully but firmly pointed out that he would not offer up the sacrifice unless Theodosius did penance for the innocent blood which had been shed. It is well known how Theodosius submitted, and the meeting between the Emperor and the Archbishop at the door of the cathedral has been immortalized by Rubens in one of his finest pictures. St Ambrose

thus asserted the principle that the Emperor, and consequently every civil magistrate, is within the Church, not above it. *Imperator intra Ecclesiam, non supra Ecclesiam est.* He is bound like any other layman to obey the ecclesiastical authority in moral questions. The point is rendered still more significant by the fact that Theodosius's crime was not what might be called a private one, but was committed in the exercise of his sovereign functions. An ecclesiastical censure of Valentinian I for the disgraceful affair of his divorce and second marriage would have been far more natural. That offence was one against canon law and against Christian morality, but no bishop had the courage to excommunicate Valentinian. The massacre of Thessalonica was no doubt a crime, but it must be admitted that the Emperor had every right to punish severely the authors of a dangerous insurrection. Ambrose frequently states that he has no desire to deal with temporal affairs that do not concern him; nevertheless he establishes the principle that the Church has the right to judge and to condemn any action of the temporal power in so far as it may violate the laws of the Church and of God. He implicitly reminds the kings of the world that they are merely the subjects of the King of kings. There is but a step from the penance of Theodosius to the festival of Christ the King.

CHAPTER V

THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS

Nos enim devincti sumus cathedrae S. Petri. Licet enim Roma magna est et vulgata, per istam Cathedram tantum apud nos est magna et clara.

S. Columban, Epist. v (*Migne*, '*P. L.*,' 80, 279).

THREE external causes, the removal of the capital, the growth of heresy, and the barbarian invasions, helped to increase the spiritual importance of the Roman See. After the brief rule of Maxentius Rome ceased to be the permanent residence of the executive. The medieval Guelphs, whose historical ideas were, if possible, even more ingenuous and extravagant than those of their rivals, taught that Constantine, out of respect for the Holy See and desire to grant it the greatest possible liberty, made over the temporal government of Rome to the Pope and removed himself to the East. The course of history is unfortunately not so simple, and the causes of the temporal power of the Popes are still obscure, though they are undoubtedly influenced by the political and economic decline of the city. The division of the Empire into a Western and an Eastern portion had long been inevitable, and restored to Rome that Latin and Occidental character which had often been obscured under the rule of earlier Emperors. Constantine was able to choose the site of his capital so well that only the

present day has witnessed its economic decline, but Rome was not in such a favoured position. In its earliest days its geographical situation allowed it to dominate Latium and Southern Etruria and later to extend its conquests over the Italian peninsula, but the growth of its transmarine Empire was due to the native genius alone. In the centre of the Mediterranean it could, and did, unite to a certain extent the West and the East, but even this advantage disappeared after the division of the Empire. It was then not only inconveniently distant from the frontiers, it was actually unsafe, since it was not protected by any natural defences and was easily assailable both by sea and land, as was convincingly proved by Attila and Genseric. For three centuries after the terrible battle at the Colline gate, when the Samnites all but succeeded in destroying the city, Rome had not been threatened by a hostile army, but the ever-increasing danger of the barbarians induced the Emperor Aurelian to fortify it in haste. The great extent of the walls and the unwarlike character of the population rendered these defences of little value. A vigorous Emperor, ready to lead his army to the most threatened section of the frontier, would prefer to reside at Milan, Arles or Trier; a timid one would seek the security of the impassable marshes of Ravenna.

The temporal and the spiritual influence of the Pope gained greatly by the absence of the Court. At first sight it might appear as though a resident Emperor would have bestowed greater dignity on the Holy See and supported its claims with greater vigour, while the Pope himself would have had the

opportunity of gaining the ear of the sovereign and thus influencing his policy. The importance of the Sees of Constantinople, Milan, Ravenna, Arles was entirely due to the presence of a monarch and the consequent royal favour. Rome, however, did not need it: it was the Imperial City by right, not by residence, the seat of the Universal Monarchy and of the Universal Church, the spiritual birthplace of all Christians and Romans. It therefore was and still is superior to economic and political circumstances; it owes its position more to immortal ideas than to contingent events. Ravenna is dead, Constantinople is dying, Arles, Trier, Aachen live on in prosperous obscurity, Milan is feverishly multiplying its factory chimneys, Rome alone continues as it ever was and perhaps ever shall be. The presence of the sovereign could add little to the honour of the Pope, and might well impair his freedom. The Emperors, in increasing the rank of their domestic Prelates, pursued, consciously and unconsciously, a definitely selfish policy. They sedulously fostered the powers and dignities of the See of Constantinople so that, after rendering it supreme in the East, they were able to make it subject to themselves. The immense influence which St Ambrose exercised over the various monarchs whom he served must be ascribed to his own ability and charm, and to a knowledge of the ways of courts which is certainly not to be found in his writings. One of the chief disadvantages of a ' government by antechamber ' is that too often its policy is determined by a rivalry of persons, not of ideas: an able and honest man may incur either the unreason-

able friendship or the unreasonable dislike of the sovereign. In the former case his influence may be great and important; in the latter he may involve in his ruin his party and his principles. The enmity of the Court of Constantinople to Chrysostom and Nestorius sprang evidently from personal dislike. In Rome, on the other hand, the Emperor could respect the dignity of the Pope without being antagonized by his person. He could determine impartially cases of contested elections on the report of officials who were usually disinterested, since, during the fourth century at least, they were often pagans.

The importance and wealth of the Roman See naturally rendered the Pope the leading citizen of Rome, but for a long time his influence on the temporal affairs of the city was more moral than legal. The ' Patrimony ' of the Roman Church was imposing and was held on exceptionally favourable terms; it is probable that, together with the estates of the Roman Basilicas, it formed the most considerable private property in the Empire, but it was always considered private property; the Popes were in the position of favoured landowners, not of sovereigns. The word *Patrimonium* was also used for the Imperial estates, the ' Crown Lands,' and implied no special rights or jurisdiction apart from that which every considerable landowner at that period exercised over his tenants and peasantry. Many of the estates of the Patrimony were in distant lands, even in Gaul, though the greater portion was formed, as we have already seen, of the former Imperial possessions in the vicinity of Rome. The

Temporal Power certainly does not derive from the Patrimony, without which, however, it might not have come into being. The government of Rome, until after the Gothic wars, was in the hands of lay officials nominated by the Emperor and in those of the Senate, the membership of which remained for a considerable time pagan. The famous controversy over the altar of Victory in the Senate is a proof of the little power exercised by the Pope in Rome. The question was referred to the Emperor at Milan, and the success of the Christian party was due to the intervention of St Ambrose. We only find the Pope assuming civil powers when the central government was no longer able to administer the city.

Rome was the symbol of the unity of the Empire, a unity which was considered absolute. Even when the Empire was divided on the death of Constantine into two parts, independent of each other and frequently hostile, no contemporary would have ever thought that there was an Eastern and a Western Empire any more than he would have thought that there was an Eastern and a Western Church. There was but one Empire and one Religion; the Roman name stretched from the Euphrates to the ocean as in the days of Augustus. With the spread of barbarism and Christianity the word lost all territorial meaning; to be a Roman was to be a Christian, to be a Roman was to be a civilized being. As the Eastern half of the Empire grew more Oriental and more Greek, when the very language of Rome was all but forgotten, the Greeks still gloried in the name of Romans. They dismissed the inhabitants of the West with the contemptuous appellation of

Latins, while the native words for Greek and Hellene were restricted to the ancient pagans. Even now the modern Greek language is τὰ ῥωμαΐϊκα, the Roman tongue.

Ideals are always stronger when they are divorced from and opposed to reality. The ideal unity of Christianity was emphasized by the heresies, the ideal unity of the Empire by the barbarian invasions. The religious unity of the West was a compensation for its political dissolution into what were practically a number of independent barbarian kingdoms, and this ideal unity was further increased by the fortunate heresy of the invaders. The various Gothic and Germanic tribes had received Christianity during their invasions of the Balkan peninsula in the fourth century, when the Orient and its rulers were distracted by the Trinitarian controversy. When they turned their arms against the West and succeeded in breaking up the Empire, they preserved their Arian faith even where their subjects were almost without exception orthodox. Thus in the eyes of the Romans they added the guilt of heresy to the stain of barbarism. It was only natural that the population of the cities, Roman and Catholic, should try in every way to preserve and strengthen their connexion with the See of Rome, that is with orthodox civilization.

The new masters did nothing to impede this tendency. They made no attempt to absorb the Roman population or to identify race with territory, for in many ways they do not seem to have realized their own strength. The Roman Empire had already begun in the third century to be partly Germanized,

and this tradition, together with the Imperial policy of yielding what could not be withheld, led the barbarians to consider themselves not invaders but Roman colonists and mercenaries. Their own systems of government were democratic and tribal, unsuitable to the complex civilization which they found in the Roman provinces. They therefore kept themselves as separate as possible from the Romans in order to preserve their own laws, customs and religion. The Gothic rule in Italy under Theodoric was certainly a period of prosperity, especially when compared with those which preceded and followed it. The King's policy was one of almost absolute parity between the two nations, and it might have succeeded in eventually giving birth, as in Spain, to a new nation, had the Gothic nobles been wiser and more prudent and had the two races not been divided by the impassable barrier of religion. As long as the conquerors in Italy, in Gaul, in Spain, in Africa remained Arian, the native population felt them to be foreigners. The Catholic clergy was not oppressed or persecuted, but the priests were recruited from the most intellectual class of Roman citizens, and they therefore maintained their Roman sentiments and the ecclesiastical connexion with Rome long after the disappearance of any political tie with either Old or New Rome. The Vandals alone attempted a different policy in Africa; their king Genseric was by far the ablest of the barbarian leaders, and he determined to establish his power on an absolutist basis. He not only oppressed the Roman inhabitants but crushed the freedom of the Vandal aristocracy. He curtailed the powers of the

popular assemblies, which, among all Germanic people, were the original fount of sovereign power, and founded a hereditary autocracy. In so doing he naturally wished to break away from any connexion with Rome, and the Vandal kingdom may be considered the first national state. His policy naturally aimed at the supremacy of the Crown over the Church, and since the African Church was notoriously independent, might have been carried out had the invaders not been Arian. Genseric and his successors naturally persecuted the Catholics, and thus incurred the hostility of the greater portion of the population. The task of Belisarius would have been much more difficult if the people of Africa had not been ready to welcome him as a deliverer.

In Gaul the foundation of the great Gothic and Burgundian monarchies had reduced the provinces still dependent on Rome to a few small islands in the midst of the barbaric flood. By the end of the fifth century even these islands were submerged by the Salian Franks, a small and at that time apparently insignificant people. But the conversion of their king Clovis to the Catholic faith enabled them to found the first nation of modern Europe. They received the unstinted support of the Catholic population and of the clergy, whose abilities in the arts of civilization, and especially of law, gradually captured the conquerors. The successors of men like Sidonius Apollinaris became the trusted counsellors of the Merovingian sovereigns, and the slow incorporation of the Germans with the Gallo-Romans gave rise to a new nation, rightly called the

eldest daughter of the Church. The conversion of the Franks was not, however, of direct benefit to the Apostolic See. The Gallic Church had always been Gallican, a tendency which, however, it had not been able to develop under Arian rulers, whose heresy and consequent indifference to ecclesiastical matters naturally obliged the Gallic episcopate to maintain close relations with Rome. Under the orthodox rule of the Franks the Kings were only too ready to assume the privileges of ecclesiastical patronage and thus the episcopate became more and more corrupt till the influence of the Holy See was re-established by a new dynasty. The same process can be observed in Spain; as long as the Visigoths remained Arian the Spanish Church kept in close touch with Rome, but the Pope was not represented at the Council of Toledo in 589, which established the official conversion of the monarchy to the Catholic Faith. After that event there is practically no connexion between Rome and Spain, except for occasional complimentary letters, until the Visigothic monarchy fell before the Saracens. The conversion of barbarians from heresy marks everywhere a temporary eclipse of the influence of Rome.

In this period of transition the importance of the higher clergy was constantly increasing. The bishops, except for their wealth and liberality, had little official influence in the State, and they assumed few, if any, legal duties of a civil kind. They were, however, constantly employed in diplomatic negotiations, especially between the Roman government and the barbarians, since their sacred character

always commanded a certain respect. At Court their influence was usually put forth in order to calm and pacify the rival intrigues and cabals; after the barbarian conquest they rendered the condition of the inhabitants a little more tolerable, and managed to preserve some traces of ancient civilization. The character of St Ambrose did not render him a successful diplomat, for the asperity of his temper naturally offended the usurper Maximus with whom he was supposed to negotiate, but men such as Epiphanius of Ticinum, Sidonius Apollinaris, Remigius of Rheims, and a host of local bishops, many of whom have rightly become local saints, have deserved well of civilization and humanity. It is indeed due to their efforts that the Germanic settlement of Europe took place so successfully and without greater misery for the population. The Catholic bishops gradually became what they remained throughout the course of the Middle Ages, the counsellors of princes, the protectors of the people, the custodians of learning.

It is curious to note that during this period the political influence of the Pope is in many ways less than that of the provincial bishops. Rome, more than any other city, had preserved its own municipal government with the Senate and lay officials. Consuls were still appointed, and it was natural that the internal and foreign affairs of the city should be conducted by the Senate, the Pope only retaining the prerogative of theological negotiations with Constantinople. But in times of great crisis the Pope stood out as the representative of the City: when Rome was abandoned defenceless before the hordes

of Attila, it was Pope Leo who visited the Hun chieftain and induced him to withdraw. Leo was, of course, a very remarkable man, and his success was the more noteworthy in that the support of the two Apostles was somewhat stultified by Attila's regrettable paganism. The administration of the estates of the 'Patrimony' situated in foreign countries allowed the Popes to maintain certain relations with the barbarian courts, and St Gregory placed the estates of Provence under the protection of the French Kings.[1] Only after the total collapse of the Western Empire does the Pope begin to assume the mediation between Byzantium and the Western barbarian kingdoms, and he usually acts without any definite legal mandate, more as a friend of both parties than as an accredited diplomat. Though his legal rights were uncertain, he was always regarded with a considerable respect by the Western peoples as their ultimate ecclesiastical superior, and at the same time he was the subject of Byzantium. During the centuries of transition from Roman to Feudal civilization the bishops almost imperceptibly acquired a very large measure of temporal power. We cannot say that these powers were usurped nor that they were the result of a deliberate policy pursued by a succession of ambitious prelates all over the world, except in Rome, whose bishops, of whatever nationality, never abandoned their claims of supremacy as successors of Peter. Often temporal powers were definitely thrust upon the episcopate by the wish of the sovereign, often a compassionate bishop employed

[1] Batiffol, *Saint Gregoire le Grand*, Paris, 1928, p. 165.

the resources of his diocese in the care not only of the souls, but also of the bodies of his flock, and almost invariably the bishops alone were in a position to carry on the administration of urban life after the general collapse of Roman municipal institutions. The respect for the name of Rome, the absence and impotence of the Byzantine government, the possession of vast landed property, the Petrine Supremacy and its implications, the ambition and abilities of the Popes, these and many other contributory causes gradually created the Patrimony of St Peter, the Temporal Power and the Roman Question.

Monasticism, which soon became one of the chief supports of the Roman Church, developed at first in the East and outside its direct influence. The secular clergy were the ordinary garrison of the Church, the monks were its mobile field army, and indeed were sometimes employed like a real military force, disturbing the peace of a diocese and sometimes even overpowering the civil authorities. The monks of Egypt in particular were a constant and serious menace to the government; they supported the theology of the Alexandrine Patriarch with more than spiritual arguments, and were responsible for the shameful scenes which too often disgraced the Eastern Councils of the Church. Western monasticism, which, as an organization, may be considered a creation of St Benedict, was more devout and less fanatic. It should be remembered that for a long time it was an association of laymen and that at first it was unusual for monks to become priests. In every province of the Latin world the

monastic life had long been practised and admired, but these lay associations might have grown up more or less independent of one another, and have thus been of little use to the Church. In Gaul especially SS. Martin of Tours, Cassian and Caesarius of Arles had all been active in founding communities for both men and women. St Benedict's truly Roman genius produced the Rule which, gradually adopted by nearly all other communities, rendered Western monasticism a disciplined and organized body. During the course of the seventh century St Columban, born in an island which had never been subject to the Roman Empire, founded monasteries from Scotland to Lombardy, most of which later adopted the Rule of St Benedict and thus formed an unbroken chain of houses from Montecassino and Rome to the ocean. They became the schools from which could be drawn men of courage and ability, entirely devoted to the interests of the universal Church and ready to undertake the most difficult and dangerous missions, and their importance in the history of the world can scarcely be exaggerated. The secular clergy might be oppressed or corrupted by temporal rulers who exercised with vigour their ecclesiastical patronage; the monks, on the other hand, had little to fear from the mighty, and by founding subsidiary houses in the most distant lands covered the whole of Europe with an ecclesiastical net, the ropes of which were held in Rome. They wandered from one monastery to another with the permission of their superior, unlike the secular clergy that could not leave its post without the permission of the government, and were thus one of the surest means

of spreading information and doctrine and of giving Rome news of its nascent Empire. The famous monastery of the Sleepless Monks at the Studion was practically the permanent embassy of the Pope in Constantinople, and it maintained its close connexion with Rome until the final rupture. From his own monastery on the Clivus Scauri, St Gregory drew many of his most valuable collaborators, and appointed them to dioceses where they naturally upheld the dignity of the Roman Pontiff. From that monastery Augustine moved to the conquest of England, and a century later another Gregory sent one of Augustine's spiritual children to conquer Germany for Christianity and Rome. Even the vices which, unfortunately, often developed with great rapidity in the communities were of use in that they provided a constant justification for Papal interference. However much we must deplore the Oriental fanaticism and the Occidental corruption of many of the monks, we must always admire their missionary zeal and their preservation of agriculture and of much learning, while we must thank their courage for the permanent benefits of the silk industry.

The strongly ascetic character of early Christianity which gave rise to monasticism also brought about the celibacy of the clergy, a reform which eventually increased the power of the Church. From the earliest times chastity was considered one of the most important Christian virtues; marriage itself was merely a concession to human frailty, and many of the early Fathers seem almost to agree with the Manichaeans who condemned it entirely. It is indeed probable that the asceticism of many of the

Oriental and semi-Christian religions strongly influenced Christian ideas. The general tendency of canon law was strongly opposed to Roman civil legislation, and tended to make marriage difficult and divorce almost impossible; the re-marriage of a widower was disapproved, and was forbidden in the case of those in holy orders, from which men who had been twice married were strictly excluded. This conception of marriage as in itself an almost sinful state naturally gave rise to the practice of clerical celibacy, and a Roman Council in 384 forbade the marriage of bishops, priests and deacons. This rule was never adopted in the East, and only gradually became general in the West, where it immeasurably increased the strength of the clerical body. A priest became a man set apart from his fellows, a man without family, home, or country. Debarred from the ordinary joys and pleasures of human life, he was able to devote himself entirely to the interests of his order. In the East the marriage of the lower clergy before ordination has resulted in its losing all influence and authority, since the bishops and metropolitans must almost invariably be chosen from the monks. Western celibacy, despite its obvious and inevitable disadvantages, did not allow the priesthood to become an hereditary profession, avoided the dangers of heredity itself and the suspicions to which it often gives rise, and ensured that the clerical career should be one open to talent, irrespective of birth. It made of the clergy a formidable international corporation, with the Bishop of Rome at its head.

CHAPTER VI

THE END OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Quid salvum est, si Roma perit?
S. Hieronymus, Epist. 123, 17.

THE history of the See and of the City of Rome during the five centuries which span the gulf separating Constantine from Charlemagne, the Classical from the Medieval world, is divided into two great periods by the principate of Justinian. The earlier period can be termed the Roman, the later the Byzantine. The Gothic wars of Justinian bring to a violent end the classical civilization of Italy and Rome. The seventh century, with the development of Benedictine monasticism, the Lombard invasion and the reign of Gregory the Great, inaugurates an entirely new age and new political, economic and spiritual conditions. The year 476 A.D., in which Odoacer deposed the Western Emperor Romulus Augustulus, is still generally considered as closing a period in the history of the world. This view is entirely groundless, and would have been rejected by all contemporaries, who, indeed, could not have conceived it. It is, strictly speaking, incorrect to say that Romulus was deposed or that the Western Empire came to an end in 476. Romulus was a usurper, and the real Emperor, Nepos, was murdered in 480. It was as a general and an emissary of the Eastern Emperor Zeno that Theodoric conquered

"IMPERATOR AUGUSTUS"

COLOSSAL BRONZE PORTRAIT STATUE OF AN EASTERN EMPEROR AT BARLETTA, BUT THE PORTRAIT HAS NOT BEEN IDENTIFIED WITH CERTAINTY

Fourth or fifth century

Italy and destroyed Odoacer. These two barbarian chieftains and their German and Ostrogothic peoples merely completed that dismemberment of the West which had begun in 418, when Honorius settled the Goths in Aquitaine. The Ostrogothic settlement in Italy was, in fact, a revolution fraught with the most momentous consequences, but did not introduce any change in constitutional theory. The theoretic unity of the Empire was in no wise impaired; if anything, it was increased, since the whole world was once more under the rule of a single Emperor. The power of the Roman name was still so great that Odoacer and Theodoric always considered themselves the Italian Viceroys of the Emperor. The Goth assumed the title of king, which only implied a sovereignty over his own people; for the Italians he was a Patricius and the Imperial Master of Soldiers. Under his rule Italy was better governed than it had been since the days of the great Theodosius. The Roman administration was preserved and strengthened, the Senate still continued to sit, a yearly consul was still appointed, the roads and monuments were kept in repair, the drainage system of the Pomptine marshes was restored, games were still held in the Circus, Boethius, Symmachus, Cassiodorus still represented not unsuitably the old Roman aristocracy. Justinian, on the other hand, is in some respects the last of the Roman, in others the first of the Byzantine Emperors. His conquest of Italy, undertaken to restore Roman authority, destroyed Roman civilization.

The Arian controversy in the fourth century

resulted, as we have seen, in Rome's assuming the championship of orthodoxy, in virtue of the Primacy of St Peter. The close alliance of Rome and Alexandria was able to impose the Nicene faith on a somewhat reluctant Orient, despite the opposition of the Emperors. When the ecclesiastical warfare was finally ended by the Council of Constantinople in 381, the East was at great pains to free itself from the supervision of the Roman See. Had the Oriental mind been less preoccupied by metaphysical speculations, and had the prelates been more charitable and less ambitious, the Eastern Church might have developed on autonomous lines, preserving a merely formal intercommunion with Rome. The renewal of the theological warfare, which was to result in the permanent division of Oriental Christianity, was directly due to the rivalry between Alexandria and Constantinople. This rivalry was already discernible at the time of St Athanasius, it became open when the Council of 381 declared Constantinople the second See of the Empire, it was embittered by the conflict between Chrysostom and Theophilus, and it finally rent the East under Cyril and Nestorius.

The doctrine of the Trinity having been settled more or less satisfactorily by a general acceptance of the Nicene Creed, the restless Greek mind began at once to exercise its activity on the next most mysterious tenet of Christianity, the ineffable mystery of the Divine Incarnation. Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, and Cyril, the Patriarch of Alexandria, were both men of boundless ambition and few scruples, though it is probable

that each was honestly convinced of the truth of his own opinions. The former, a monk of Antioch, appointed by the Emperor Theodosius II in 428, proved himself to be violent and discourteous, and soon became universally unpopular. He came to his throne determined to purge the earth of all heresies, a serious mistake on his part since he held strong theological ideas of his own. He had been educated in the Antiochian school of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and was strongly opposed to the prevalent views, derived from Apollinaris the heresiarch, which tended to confound the humanity and the divinity of Christ. He distinguished carefully between the Divine Word, the second consubstantial person of the Trinity, and its human ' Temple,' though it is doubtful whether he was really a Nestorian, that is to say, whether he believed in two persons joined together in some mysterious and unspecified way. In his sermons he exposed this doctrine, which was not popular at Constantinople, and declared that the Virgin could not properly be called 'Θεοτόκος,' ' Mother of God.' The personal character of the Patriarch and his unwise condemnation of an adjective which was deeply cherished by the monks and the rabble naturally aroused a tremendous opposition which he attempted to suppress with the strong hand. The monks of Constantinople were at that time in close relations with their Egyptian brethren, and the sermons of Nestorius were swiftly referred to the Patriarch of Alexandria. Cyril was only too willing to seize the opportunity of humbling the capital. He wrote, but without much success, violent letters to Nestorius and to the Emperor, and then

invoked the help of Pope Celestine, to whom he appealed in 430, after holding his own Egyptian Council.

It was obviously in the interest of the Pope to support Alexandria against Constantinople. The close traditional friendship of the two Sees had been cemented in the days of Athanasius, when both had suffered persecution for the firmness with which they had struggled against the Arians. The Canon which gave the second place to Constantinople was almost as objectionable to Rome as to Alexandria. The Pope, moreover, had personal reasons for disliking and suspecting Nestorius. Julian of Eclanum and other Pelagian Bishops, who had been deposed and excommunicated by Rome, had found refuge at Constantinople. Nestorius, who prided himself on his ability to detect the slightest heresy, seemed to regard them with ingenuous sympathy, despite the letters of the Pope, which he answered very evasively. Cyril gently insinuated that the influence of Constantinople was corrupting Macedonia, which at that time was a Roman Vicariate, and these various rumours were probably confirmed by the Pope's informers in the capital. The letters of the two Eastern Patriarchs and the reports from Constantinople were sufficient to inform Celestine of the details of the controversy. He was fully acquainted with the doctrines which he condemned, and the careful way in which he managed to avoid the dangerous points in dispute seems to prove that he understood them much better than Cyril. His letters to Cyril and to Nestorius declared all the excommunications pro-

nounced by the latter to be null and void. They then condemned, without specifying them, all the errors of Nestorius, and particularly re-instated the epithet ' Mother of God ' as an orthodox and pious adjective. Nestorius was given ten days in which to retract; should he prove obdurate the Pope formally deposed him and entrusted his brother of Alexandria with the execution of the sentence.[1]

The papal letters were brilliant; they condemned Nestorius, but left the mystery of the Incarnation still wrapped up in impenetrable obscurity. The ' *Theotokos*,' a minor point, on which Nestorius might have yielded, was specifically affirmed, but the Pope wisely refused to embark on a metaphysical discussion. He carefully avoided defining the errors of Nestorius, but merely condemned his person; above all, he made no attempt to define the orthodox faith. It would have been well if Cyril had imitated the Pope's prudence, but he was a passionate theologian and a most prolix writer. In order to confound his enemy still further, he condemned the errors of Nestorius specifically in twelve anathemas, which, as Gibbon remarked, ' are indelibly tinged with the colours of the Apollinarian heresy.' He maintained that the Divine and the human nature of Christ were united by a ' natural or physical union' (*ἕνωσις φυσική* or *ὑποστατική*). The phrase is ambiguous, especially as the terms ' physical ' and ' hypostatic ' were not well defined, and it is possible that Cyril was no more a Monophysite than Nestorius was a Nestorian. The phrase,

[1] Batiffol, *de Siège Apostolique*, pp. 354 ff.

however, was most unfortunate; it aroused the opposition of the whole of the Antiochian school of theology, which, though strongly hostile to any trace of Apollinarianism, did not seem willing to support Nestorius, and there is no doubt that its natural consequence is the doctrine of the One Incarnate Nature of Christ, which is still asserted by the Monophysite Churches of Egypt and Abyssinia.

The most interesting part of the whole controversy is Celestine's action in appointing Cyril the executor of his sentence, and it is curious to note that the Pope apparently did not write to the Emperor. It is possible that he thought of elevating Alexandria into a kind of Roman Vicariate over the East, through which the See of Rome might affirm the authority that had been so gravely impaired by the Council of 381. If that was really his intention, he must have had no idea of the strength and character of the Egyptian Church. Cyril made another mistake; he delayed sending the papal decree to Nestorius until he had composed his unfortunate anathemas and had summoned an Egyptian Council. By the time his messengers arrived at Constantinople Nestorius had persuaded the Emperor to summon a General Council at Ephesus for the Pentecost of 431. John Patriarch of Antioch and his supporters were three weeks late. His opinions were doubtful; he had advised Nestorius to give way, but was strongly opposed to the anathemas. Cyril, whose temper had not improved with the lapse of time, affected to consider the delay culpable and decided to hold the Council himself with his

Egyptian Bishops and those who supported Memnon of Ephesus. The Imperial representative, the Count Candidian, implored him to await at least the arrival of the Papal legates, but Cyril considered himself fully entitled to act in the Pope's name. These legates were the last to arrive, and they must have been edified to find in session a majority Council under Cyril and a minority one under Candidian and John of Antioch, who had been naturally annoyed that Cyril had refused to await his arrival. Both Councils were busy hurling excommunications and anathemas at each other, and the proceedings were further enlivened by the rioting of the Egyptian monks and the forays of the Imperial troops. It was in such an atmosphere that the Italian delegation, following its instructions, attended the assembly of Cyril and subscribed its decrees.

The Emperor found himself in a very difficult position. Cyril had the majority on his side but, in refusing to await the Oriental Bishops, had disregarded the Imperial instructions; Nestorius and John of Antioch were in a minority, but they had been supported by the Imperial representative. He decided to give effect to the decisions of both Councils and therefore deposed both Patriarchs. Riots at Alexandria, intrigues at Court, and judicious bribery, eventually forced him to allow Cyril to resume triumphant possession of his See, but Nestorius was universally unpopular, and his banishment was gradually rendered even more rigorous till his death in about 451. His followers received little support, and were finally driven by the Emperor Zeno (*ca.* 489) into Persia. Outside the

frontiers of the Empire the Nestorians flourished and multiplied; their missionaries found their way even to China, and for a short period established Christianity in that great Empire.

The triumph of Alexandria was complete and dangerous. In 444 Cyril became a Saint, and was succeeded on the Alexandrine throne by Dioscorus, a man still more impetuous and violent and of even more advanced theological opinions. Cyril, after the Ephesian Council, had come to terms with the moderates of the Antiochian school, and had wisely assented to a formula declaring ' the unconfused union of two natures.' The new Patriarch wished to crush the last vestiges of the power of Constantinople and of Antioch, and an opportunity to do so was not long in coming. Eutyches was the archimandrite of an important monastery in the capital and was the friend of the eunuch Chrysaphius, the favourite of the Emperor; he had taken a leading part in the struggle against Nestorius and accepted the theology of Cyril in its strictest form. He was now engaged in stamping out the last traces of Nestorianism, and in so doing developed and defined the doctrine of the anathemas in a Monophysite sense. In 448 he was accused of heresy and was condemned by Flavian, the Patriarch of Constantinople, in a local Synod. Eutyches appealed to Rome, and to Egypt and Jerusalem. The Throne of St Peter was at that time occupied by one of the greatest of his successors, St Leo I, who claimed the right of deciding the doctrinal matter himself, in virtue of the authority of his See, but Theodosius, influenced by Chrysaphius and Dioscorus, decided to call a Council at

Ephesus for the summer of 449, and the Pope agreed to be represented by his legates. He had been invited to come in person, but he was too wise to take the risk. Having examined the letters of Eutyches and of Flavian, together with the acts of the Synod, he had come to the conclusion that Eutyches was rightly condemned and exposed the correct doctrine in his famous Dogmatic Epistle addressed to Flavian. He proclaimed that the single person of Christ united two distinct natures, the Divine and the human, without confusion or commixture, each retaining its own properties. But the Council was presided over, or rather ruled, by Dioscorus; the Papal Epistle was not read, and the Papal legates, who, not knowing Greek, had been unable to take part in the debates, did not vote and ran some danger of their lives from the insolent fury of the triumphant party.

The ' Robber Council,' as it was stigmatized by Leo, deposed Flavian, who died of the injuries he had received, and several other Oriental Bishops, declared Eutyches to be orthodox, ignored Rome and the West, and established the ecclesiastical tyranny of Alexandria. Leo was furious, and asked that a General Council should meet in the freer air of Italy, under his own personal supervision. There the orthodox stolidity of the West could have overcome the metaphysical subtleties of the East, and the votes of the prelates would not be influenced by an Emperor and a eunuch. Valentinian III supported the Pope, but Theodosius answered that the Eastern Church was in peace and that the Ephesian Council had settled the whole question.

A fortunate or miraculous accident caused the death of Theodosius in 450, and his successor Marcian reversed his policy. His first act was the execution of Chrysaphius, possibly for personal reasons, since the eunuch favoured the Green and the new Emperor the Blue faction of the Circus. Marcian, moreover, had married the Empress Pulcheria, the elder sister of Theodosius, who had governed during her brother's minority, and whose influence had been undermined by the favourite eunuch in a manner most insulting to herself. It was therefore natural that she should dislike the policy of Chrysaphius. She was a woman of austere piety, and had already, during her regency, come in conflict with Alexandria and Cyril over the disgraceful murder of Hypatia; her aversion must have been increased by the favour shown to Cyril by her sister-in-law, the Empress Eudocia, whom she had good reason to dislike, although she, too, had been exiled to Jerusalem by the machinations of Chrysaphius. Marcian thus came to the conclusion that the tyranny of Alexandria should be abolished, and he probably intended specifically to restore the Eastern Primacy of Constantinople of 381. But this could not be accomplished without the support of Rome, since the Orient was on the whole favourable to the Monophysite doctrine. An Eastern Council was indispensable, even though the Pope was opposed to it, for the Eastern Church was not willing to accept the Tome of Leo without discussion. The Pope finally yielded. A council of over five hundred bishops met in 451 at Chalcedon on the Bosphorus, opposite Constantinople. The Papal legates were given the

presidency, but the assembly was really governed and controlled by a committee of laymen, high officers of State who had been nominated by the Emperor. Their authority secured the complete triumph of Rome; Dioscorus was deposed, and the Eastern Bishops accepted the faith and subscribed the Epistle of the Pope.

Modern historians are inclined to say hard things about the Council of Chalcedon. It has been called the Robber and Traitor Council, which betrayed the secret of the Greek faith. We must frankly admit that the voting was not free, that the majority of the Eastern Bishops inclined rather to the faith of Eutyches than to that of Leo, that the decision was determined by the Imperial influence. Politically it was a great mistake, for the tyranny of Alexandria was only overthrown at the cost of the disruption of the Oriental Church. For the next two hundred years the Emperors were obliged to contend with the disaffection of the Monophysites, adopting sometimes a policy of persecution and sometimes one of conciliation, till the disaffected provinces fell an easy prey to the Saracens. The critics, however, seem to forget that the issue at Chalcedon was something far greater than the peace of the Eastern Empire or the unity of its Church; the future of Christianity itself was at stake. Had the opinions of Eutyches and Dioscorus triumphed the whole course of history would have been changed, for the doctrine of Chalcedon is certainly the only one that can be accepted by the modern world. It is quite impossible to imagine that St Francis could have been a Monophysite, and one St

Francis amply compensates the world for the loss of Egypt.

Thirty years of incessant ecclesiastical strife, which in Egypt assumed almost the form of a rebellion, caused the Emperor Zeno to attempt a measure of conciliation. Acting on the advice of the Patriarch Acacius, he published in 481 the famous Henotikon, a letter addressed to the Egyptian Church. Without making any new definition of faith, it tried to set aside and ignore the Council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Pope Leo, though anathematizing the persons of Nestorius and Eutyches. For the first time the Emperor assumed, though not formally, the right to define matters of faith, not of discipline, by virtue of his temporal position, thus usurping the functions of an Oecumenical Council. Pope Leo had already claimed that the See of St Peter could determine disputed points of doctrine without reference to a Council, and his successors, though they did not uphold the claim with the same vigour and ability, were naturally unwilling to allow the Emperor to usurp their prerogative. Chalcedon had been the triumph of Rome, and any attack on its doctrine was an attack on Rome and the West. Odoacer ruled in Italy, and was quite willing to give the Pope a free hand. In 484 Pope Felix III solemnly excommunicated Acacius and his adherents, and was supported by the Sleepless Monks of the Studion, one of whom pinned the decree on the back of the Patriarch while he was officiating. The Henotikon restored a measure of peace to the East, but the more extreme Monophysites were not conciliated, and the

favour shown to them by Zeno's successor Anastasius alienated moderate opinion in the East itself. The schism thus inaugurated between the East and the West might, however, have been permanent had it not been for the ambitious policy and the dreams of conquest of Justin and his nephew Justinian.

Flavius Petrus Sabbatius Justinianus, to give him his full name, was born at a small village near the modern Uskub, in what was then the province of Illyria and is now Serbia. He ruled the East for nearly half a century, for, during the nine years of his uncle's rule (518-527), he was the real power behind the throne. Illyria was still a Latin rather than an Oriental province: Latin was the native tongue of Justinian who, except for his keenness about theology, appears to have had a Roman rather than an Oriental mind. He had an almost mystical idea of the dignity of his office and of the Roman name, a passion for hard work and minute detail, and a sublime confidence in his own judgement. He was honest, well meaning, and conscientious, but his intelligence was not of the very first order. He wished to restore the former boundaries of the Empire and the glory of the Roman name; conscious of his might and power and of his consequent duty towards his subjects, he conceived that the obligations of government were fully paternal. When an able, hard-working monarch with a passion for details begins to consider himself the father of his country, a period of absolute and vexatiously meddlesome autocracy is the inevitable result. Justinian, in promulgating the code and in building

Sta Sophia, achieved the greatest works of Roman genius, law and architecture, but at the same time he swept away the last traces of the ancient Roman government and of a free Republic. Yet in many ways the autocracy of Byzantium was the natural result of the first Caesar's democracy and defeat of the old Roman aristocracy: the abolition of the consulship in 542 A.D. was the long-delayed conclusion of the battle of Pharsalus in 48 B.C. The democratic origin of the Empire was still preserved by Justinian. He considered himself to be the State, to be Rome itself, and the ideas of the greatness of his own power and authority were indissolubly united to those of the greatness and power of Rome. He was, ultimately, responsible to his subjects, and would have repudiated any suggestion that he ruled by Divine Right. His own conception of his position, rights and duties was more similar to the various modern ideas of the absolutist State, in which the State itself is supreme and is the origin of any political personality which its citizens may possess. Justinian was the State, and as such, not on account of any Divine inspiration or privilege, he considered it his right and his duty to regulate the lives, the opinions, and almost the thoughts, of his subjects. The only difference between his idea and that of the modern absolutist States which have sprung up since the war is that in the one case the State is conceived as an abstraction, in the other it is personified in a single individual, the Roman Emperor. Such a system of government is often exasperating, even when its head is, like Frederic II or several of the modern dictators, a man of great genius. Un-

fortunately, Justinian was no Frederic II; he has been rightly compared to Philip II of Spain. Both had in their service men of the greatest ability, whom they mistrusted, hampered, and checked; both strove for much and accomplished little; both made insecure conquests and placed on their subjects burdens which they could not bear; both lived in religious buildings, and the luminous glory of Sta Sophia is as expressive of the Roman genius as is the gloom of the Escorial of the Counter-Reformation despotism.

Such a ruler will naturally claim the right to legislate on religious matters, and Justinian regulated the worship of even his Jewish subjects; if, however, he is himself a theologian he at once becomes a public menace. Justinian's first interferences in ecclesiastical affairs were dictated primarily by political considerations, but later he threw himself into the theological arena with enthusiasm, and with results disastrous alike to the Church, to the State, and probably to his own soul. We must remember that Justin and Justinian still considered their Empire to be the same as that of Trajan or Constantine, and it was therefore natural that they should conceive it to be their duty not only to protect the diminished Empire over which they actually ruled but to re-establish their authority in all the Western provinces. The spiritual unity of the Empire had been shattered by the more or less disguised repudiation of the Council of Chalcedon on the part of Zeno and Anastasius, and it was therefore essential to restore religious unity before embarking on the military measures necessary to

restore it politically. The favour shown to the Monophysites by the Emperor Anastasius had already caused a rebellion in Thrace, headed by an able general, Vitalian. His successes had already caused the Emperor to negotiate with the Pope, but the Pope's terms were humiliating to the Imperial dignity and the rebel was defeated though not destroyed. Justinian, on ascending the throne in 518, immediately summoned Vitalian to the capital, and opened negotiations with Rome for a settlement of the religious question. A synod held in Constantinople in 518 expelled the Monophysite Bishops, who had been appointed by Anastasius. In the following year the legates of Pope Hormisdas arrived, and were received with great honour, being met at the tenth milestone from the city by Justinian and Vitalian in person. The Pope was technically still a subject of the Emperor, but in fact was quite outside his jurisdiction; the demands were therefore explicit and uncompromising and they had to be accepted in full. The memory of five Patriarchs and of two Emperors was solemnly anathematized, and Constantinople was compelled to admit the infallibility of the Apostolic See. Justinian at once inaugurated a vigorous persecution of the Monophysite Churches.

The triumph of Rome was indeed complete, but it was dangerous and unstable. It was due to political circumstances, and it could be endangered by any change in the political situation. Union with Rome naturally entailed persecution of the Monophysites, and consequently produced disaffection in the East, which was more or less serious according to

the relations of the Empire with Persia. The ecclesiastical policy of Justinian fluctuated during his whole reign according as he pursued an Oriental or an Occidental policy. On Justin's accession the re-union with Rome was imperative, since Vitalian was still in arms and since the reconquest of Italy had probably been already decided in principle. Justinian, himself a Latin Illyrian, probably sympathized conscientiously with the Latin theology, and was in the fortunate position of being able to negotiate with Rome in its own language. He was, however, greatly influenced by his wife Theodora, by political, personal, or religious convictions a staunch Monophysite, and he believed that a formula of reconciliation between the two theological schools could be found and that he, the Roman Emperor, was capable of finding it. Both hopes were chimerical, and his ecclesiastical policy was a series of mistakes by which he oppressed and distracted the orthodox without in the least conciliating the Monophysites.

The first attempt was made as early as 519, during the negotiations with the Pope, when the Papal legates were still in Constantinople. Four Scythian monks had affirmed that it was orthodox to say that one of the Trinity had been crucified, a doctrine known as the Theopaschite doctrine. Justinian hoped that this phrase would conciliate the Monophysites, for it was obviously unacceptable to the Nestorians. But the Sleepless Monks of the Studion vigorously condemned it, and the four Scythians went to Rome in person. Justinian hoped that the Pope might be induced to approve the formula, but Hormisdas, who was apparently offended by

the behaviour and the manners of the monks, refused to give any definite decision. He wisely and rightly declared that the whole question was factitious and unnecessary.

The persecution of the Monophysites continued throughout the reign of Justin, but Justinian, on becoming Emperor in 527, determined to try a policy of conciliation. His decision was probably hastened by the outbreak of war with Persia, which rendered it imperative that the frontier provinces should be kept satisfied and quiet. In 529 the Monophysite Bishops were allowed to return from exile, and several conferences were held in the capital but without any useful result. In 533 the Emperor returned to the Theopaschite question, and issued an edict approving the formula. By his action he did not succeed in reconciling the Monophysites, who had no intention of abandoning the main issue, but he placed Pope John II in a very difficult position. The Apostolic See had always declared that the Tome of Leo had been a perfectly complete and sufficient declaration of faith. Any expansion of its doctrine, even if intrinsically correct, was unnecessary, and might be dangerous, since it could be used to mask an attack on the Council of Chalcedon. If he had been free to decide, Pope John would probably have imitated the example of his predecessor Hormisdas, but his position was no longer so secure. Theodoric had died in 526, and the Gothic aristocracy was plainly becoming more and more intolerant of his philo-Roman policy, which had been continued by his daughter Amalasuntha. A considerable section of the Roman Senate,

and even of the people, was looking towards Byzantium which, in a series of splendid victories, had laid low the kingdom of the Vandals and reconquered Africa. The Pope therefore, considering that the formula was not in itself heretical and that it had been already approved by the Emperor and the Patriarch, decided to confirm it, and was consequently obliged to excommunicate the Sleepless Monks, who had been till then the chief Papal allies in Constantinople.

John's successor, Agapetus, was the last Pope who was able to impose his will on the Imperial Court. The approval of the Theopaschite doctrine had left the situation unchanged and, at the death of the Patriarch in 535, Theodora was able to procure the election of Anthimus, a secret Monophysite, and in many other ways to show favour to the opponents of Chalcedon. Ephraim, Patriarch of Antioch, warned the Pope that heresy was again in the ascendant. By this time war with the Goths had clearly become inevitable. Belisarius had conquered Sicily with ease, and Amalasuntha's murder had furnished the Emperor with a plausible pretext. The cowardly Gothic King, Theodahad, hoping against hope to be able to avoid the war, induced the Pope to undertake a mission to Constantinople. Agapetus arrived at the capital at the beginning of 536, and was received with great cordiality by the Emperor, who was delighted to be able to talk to him in his native language. We know little about the political negotiations, which were obviously destined to fail, and the Pope, who was a man of great learning, was more interested in the outstand-

ing dogmatic questions. He refused to communicate with Anthimus, procured his deposition, and consecrated his successor, Menas, who, after the Pope's death a few weeks later, held a synod, which condemned all the Monophysite leaders. The Emperor confirmed its acts, and a vigorous persecution of heretics was at once begun under the auspices of the new Patriarch, of Ephraim of Antioch, and of the Papal apocrisiarius or nuncio, the able deacon Pelagius. The victory of the Apostolic See was again determined by political considerations. In view of the military operations which had already begun in Italy, the necessity of conciliating Italian opinion was greater than even the influence of Theodora.

The Empress was not the woman to accept calmly such a reverse. She concealed Anthimus in her own palace, and attempted by an underhand intrigue to obtain his restoration. She was well acquainted with the Roman deacon Vigilius, who had been Papal nuncio under Agapetus. He was a man of great ambition and few scruples, who had nearly become Pope some years previously on the death of Pope Boniface II, who wanted to nominate him his successor. On the sudden death of Agapetus he thought he saw his chance, and came to terms with Theodora. She gave him 200 lb. of gold and letters of recommendation, which would secure for him the support of Belisarius and Antonina: Vigilius, in return, allowed her to expect, if he did not actually promise, that he would restore Anthimus. He at once set off for Rome, but arrived too late; the Gothic party, with the support of Theodahad, had

already elected a respectable subdeacon Silverius, the son of the former Pope Hormisdas. The Empress then wrote to the Pope asking the re-instatement of her favourite, and on the Pope's refusal decided that the time had come for strong measures. Belisarius had occupied Rome, and the city was in a state of siege, with a large Gothic army encamped in front of the Asinarian Gate, close to the Papal residence of the Lateran. The Pope was accused of communicating with the enemy, a trumped-up charge, since Belisarius allowed him to understand that he would not be molested if he obeyed the wishes of the Empress. He again refused, but shortly afterwards he was arrested and deported, and Vigilius was consecrated in March 537. The unfortunate Silverius was first exiled to Patara in Lycia, but a little later he was sent back to Italy, probably at the instigation of the Emperor, who was not responsible for his persecution. But he again fell into the hands of Vigilius and Belisarius, who relegated him to the island of Palmaria, where he either died of hunger or was assassinated by order of Antonina.

For Vigilius it is impossible to feel much sympathy. The office which he had gained by simony and female intrigues he disgraced by cowardice and tergiversation. He promptly went back on his understanding with the Empress, and with the help of his nuncio Pelagius was able to maintain the condemnation of Anthimus and the Monophysites without forfeiting the support of Justinian and of Theodora. But the Empress did not forget: the treatment meted to Pope Silverius had shown the

power of the Emperor in Rome and Vigilius was to find out that those who are elevated by the temporal power may be also abased by the same means.

We have seen how the Henotikon had been the first attempt by an Emperor to define matters of faith on his own authority. Justinian, although he had taken part in the condemnation of Zeno, carried the same policy, conveniently termed Caesaropapism, to intolerable lengths. In 543, at the unwise instance of the Patriarch Menas and of the nuncio Pelagius, he issued an edict condemning ten opinions of Origen, whose influence among the monks of Palestine was considerable. Soon afterwards he again attempted to conciliate the Monophysites by the famous edict of the Three Chapters, in which he condemned Theodore of Mopsuestia and certain specified writings of Theodoret and of Ibas. Theodore was considered the spiritual founder of Nestorianism, and the other two fathers had vigorously opposed Cyril of Alexandria. They had been treated with respect by the Council of Chalcedon, and were therefore most objectionable to the Monophysites. The edict was, however, a great mistake. The opinions condemned were not strictly orthodox, but the condemnation of the dead was a dangerous innovation. It seemed another underhand blow at the Council of Chalcedon, and it again failed to conciliate the opposition. But the Imperial authority was able to secure the signatures of the Oriental Patriarchs, on condition that the Pope should be consulted.

Totila was at that time besieging Rome: the situation in the city was critical, and Vigilius, who

was probably the usual mixture of bully and coward, was not sorry to leave. His forcible abduction seems to have been an elaborately staged excuse to enable him to desert his flock with a certain dignity. On 22 November, 545, a body of soldiers arrived at the Church of Sta. Caecilia, where the Pope was celebrating the festival of the dedication of the Basilica, and ordered him to leave at once for Constantinople. The crowd believed this action to be Theodora's revenge, and made some attempt to mob the boat which was moored on the Tiber at the neighbouring quay. Vigilius went to Sicily, where he stayed a considerable time. He communicated with several Western bishops, who all declared themselves strongly opposed to the edict, and he decided that it was his duty to condemn it. In January 547 he arrived at the capital, where he remained immersed in the theological controversy till 555. We have not the space to deal with the details of the controversy,[1] disgraceful alike to the Emperor, the Pope and the Eastern Church. The Pope was at first received honourably, later he was ill-treated and confined. His constant equivocations almost justify his scandalous treatment by the Emperor. Three times he changed his mind on the question, and supported with varying vigour the most opposite opinions. Justinian remained firm, and the Council which met in Constantinople in 553 was composed of carefully selected prelates, who approved the Imperial edict. The Pope, by his evasions and contradictions, had debased the honour of his See at a time when Narses

[1] They are described by Grisar, *History of Rome and the Popes*, III, pp. 26 ff.; Bury, *Later Empire* (1923), 2, pp. 384 ff.; Dom. J. Chapman, *op. cit.*, pp. 224 ff.

had finally succeeded in destroying the Goths. At last he bent to the Imperial will and subscribed the decrees of the Council, thus provoking a serious schism in the West. As a compensation he received from Justinian the Pragmatic Sanction, an edict which settled the affairs of Italy and conferred great benefits on the Italians and on the Roman See. He died at Syracuse during his return journey to Rome, and was buried in the Basilica of St Sylvester in the Catacombs of Priscilla.

The Fifth Oecumenical Council was a very serious blow for the prestige of the Apostolic See, which had so greatly increased during the lax rule of the Western Emperors and even of the Arian Goths. The re-establishment of a strong lay authority in Rome necessarily offended the independence of the Pope, an independence which was essential to the free exercise of the rights and duties implicit in the Primacy. The rule of an orthodox and energetic Emperor gave to the Church the support of the State, but subjected it to a rigorous control which, in the Byzantine and Russian Orient, finally deprived it of all religious freedom. A fortunate succession of events enabled the Popes to emancipate themselves from the unwelcome tutelage of Constantinople, but a long time had still to pass before they were able to recover the authority and respect which they had possessed under Leo, Hormisdas, and Agapetus.

The ancient world had indeed passed away. Vigilius was the last Pope to be buried in the Catacombs, thus closing what we may call the Heroic Age of the Roman Church. In theology the

condemnation of Origen may be considered the condemnation of the Platonic influence in Christianity, which had produced, together with much error, speculations both brilliant and profound. It was a blow from which Eastern theology never recovered and which marks the beginning of its decline. At the same time, the approval of the Theopaschite doctrine and the writings of a brilliant theologian, Leontius of Byzantium, and of others began the application of Aristotelian philosophy to the interpretation of dogma, and may be considered the forerunners of the Western scholasticism of the Middle Ages.

Twenty years of incessant warfare had achieved the ruin of Italy. Milan had been sacked and destroyed in circumstances of unusual barbarity; Rome had been besieged three times and had been left for a short period entirely devoid of inhabitants. Most of the members of the Senate and of the aristocracy who had been able to save their lives had fled to Sicily and Constantinople. The few thousand souls that still remained in Rome gathered in wretched hovels built in the ruins of the ancient grandeur round the Fora and in the Campus Martius along the banks of the river. The hills were abandoned and their monuments soon fell into decay. The last *venationes* had taken place in the Colosseum in 523, the last games in the Circus in 550 under Totila. The fate of one monument is more than that of any other typical of the history of Rome. On the Etruscan shore of the Tiber the Emperor Hadrian had built a colossal mausoleum for himself and his successors. It was faced with Parian marble and

decorated with a multitude of bronze and marble statues. During the first Gothic siege of Rome in 537 it was occupied by the defenders, since it dominated the crossing of the river and the approach to the suburb of St Peter's; the garrison was able to repel an attack of exceptional violence by hurling down upon the Goths these priceless decorations. Thus the Imperial tomb was transformed into an impregnable and gloomy stronghold, the key of Rome, and we can divide the history of the city into four parts, according as the mausoleum was used as a tomb, a fortress, a prison, or a museum.

CHAPTER VII

THE AGE OF DARKNESS

Nobilibus fueras quondam constructa patronis,
Subdita nunc servis. Heu male, Roma, ruis!
Deseruere tui tanto te tempore reges:
Cessit et ad Graecos nomen honosque tuum.

AFTER the destruction of the Ostrogoths and the repulse of their Frankish allies, the distracted and ruined Italic peninsula was wisely governed for thirteen years by the eunuch Narses, who was granted the title of *Patricius* and *Dux Italiae*. By the Pragmatic Sanction an effort was made to return to the state of things which had existed in the time of Theodoric. Narses, whose constitutional position was peculiar, united the military and the civil power in his own person, and his successors, the Exarchs, were given all the authority formerly enjoyed by the *Magister Militum*, which had been the official title of Theodoric himself. The capital was re-established at Ravenna, which was greatly beautified. All the contracts and private rights of property which had been recognized by the Gothic Kings were confirmed, and Justinian even attempted, though without much success, to preserve the monuments of classical Rome, which, in theory, were still Imperial property. Funds were assigned to the two most pressing needs of the city, the repair of the aqueducts and the upkeep of the Tiber

embankments, but these funds probably existed only on paper, since the population continued to drink the river water till the sixteenth century and the Tiber continued to flood the lower part of the city almost to the present day.

The Pragmatic Sanction recognized officially the enhanced authority which the Episcopate had acquired in civic administration. The provincial Governors were to be elected from among the residents by the local bishops and magnates. The bishops were, moreover, given a general control and supervision over the civil service and its staff and, with the gradual collapse of the Imperial bureaucratic machine, they naturally assumed the rights and duties of the civil government. Ecclesiastical affairs were the absolute prerogative of the clergy with a final appeal to the Pope, but if a priest were accused of a criminal offence, he was first tried by an ecclesiastical tribunal which could deprive and degrade him and then he was handed over to the secular authorities for punishment as a layman. With the passing of time this secular privilege was also lost and the ecclesiastical courts were able to free themselves from any outside control or interference, even in criminal matters, with the result that the clerical caste became a strong and independent corporation.

The two centuries after the Byzantine conquest are in many ways the darkest in the history of Italy. They were fraught with danger for the Apostolic See, whose authority and independence were very low. Rome, instead of being the Metropolis of the West and the leader of Christianity, became prac-

tically the most westerly of the Oriental Churches, with little influence in its own spiritual domains, and it was forced to defend with scarcely any weapons the positions conquered by earlier Pontiffs. The conversion of the Gothic and Germanic kingdoms to orthodox Christianity and their constant hostility to the Empire greatly diminished their intercourse with Rome, and the few attempts made by the Popes to interfere with the Transalpine Churches, which had greatly degenerated under State control, met with little encouragement or success. Yet we must recognize that the Popes of this period, who appear in our scanty records like shadows and phantoms, must have been men of great ability and courage. Many were Greeks and Syrians, but, irrespective of nationality, they all tried to uphold the Roman and Universal traditions of the See, and even in their helpless situation they faced the Imperial and the barbarian oppressors with all the vigour and courage of their predecessors of the fifth century.

Could the Empire of Justinian have survived and been consolidated, the See of Rome would have been reduced by Constantinople to the position of the Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem, and the Temporal Power of the Popes would never have developed, since the government of the city and its territory would have remained in the hands of the Imperial officials. For Western Christianity such a result would have been disastrous. Outside the frontiers of the Empire the Churches would have grown up on national and later on feudal lines, so that the particularism which ended by wrecking

the Romano-Germanic Empire would have broken up the unity of Christendom at a time when the steadying and civilizing influence of religion was most needed. In such circumstances it is probable that Western Europe would have fallen before the Saracens or the Tartars.

A series of new calamities freed the Apostolic See from the danger of Byzantine despotism. The history of the Later Roman Empire is a long, herculean struggle against a hydra with a thousand heads. No sooner had one enemy been overcome than a new one sprang up in a totally unexpected quarter. After the Germanic nations had been brought to a standstill the Empire was called upon to face the Slavs and the Bulgarians. Hardly had Heraclius overcome Persia, a task that had baffled the greatest of the Caesars, when his victories were set at naught by the sudden and incredible rise of the Saracens. When the Caliphate at last began to decline, the Empire was finally extinguished by the combined efforts of the Latins and the Turks.

Justinian died in 565. Had he lived longer the Church which, above all things needed rest and tranquillity in order to recover from the controversy over the Three Chapters, would have again suffered from the Imperial theology. The Emperor seems to have always regarded with a certain sympathy the doctrines of Monophysitism, and in the last years of his reign he was converted, it is said by a monk from Joppa, to a branch of that heresy, Aphthartodocetism, which had been founded by Julian of Halicarnassus. It was in many respects a logical development of the Greek dogma of salvation and

affirmed that Christ's body was incorruptible from the moment it was assumed by the Divine Word. The Patriarch of Constantinople, who dared resist his Imperial master, was deposed and banished. The other Churches were unanimous in their opposition to the new doctrine, but the Emperor, having once triumphed over a Pope, was about to engage in a struggle which might have resulted in the supremacy of the Temporal over the Spiritual power, when death allowed Justinian to discover in heaven the truth about which he had legislated on earth.

Three years later the Empire began to lose those Italian provinces which had only been conquered after twenty years of warfare. Another Germanic people, the Lombards, descended into Italy and first established themselves in that great plain of Northern Italy, a part of which still bears their name. The first effect of the invasion was to reduce the importance of the Churches of Milan and of Aquileia, which were in a state of schism owing to their refusal to accept the decisions of the last Council on the Three Chapters. Aquileia itself was destroyed, but its Archbishops, who proudly assumed the title of Patriarchs, retired to those impregnable lagoons from which Venice was to be born, like Venus, from the sea-foam. Here they were able to defy the Lombards and the Pope, for the Imperial government was willing to tolerate schismatics whom it was unable to persecute. The schism was, however, localized: the ambition and rivalry of the clergy gave rise to an internal schism, and the conversion of the Lombard Duchy of Friuli brought

with it the election of a rival Patriarch at Cividale, so that by the end of the seventh century the controversy of the Three Chapters died a natural death. The capture of Milan extinguished the schism in that See even more rapidly. The Archbishop fled to Genoa, where he soon died. Part of his flock had followed him and part had remained in the conquered city. Two bishops were elected, one of whom, the candidate of the refugees, neutralized his lack of possession by resuming communion with the Apostolic See. The death of his rival enabled him to return to Milan and thus the schism came to a speedy and fortunate conclusion.

In four years (568-572) the Lombard King Alboin overran Italy and conquered not only the northern plain but also the largest portion of Central Italy. The government of Narses had been unpopular: he was rightly or wrongly accused of avarice and extortion, probably on account of a financial policy imposed on him by Constantinople. On the accession of Justin II, the Italians voiced their complaints and the eunuch was deposed. He withdrew to Naples, and the people attributed their ensuing calamities to his vengeance, for he was said to have invited the barbarians to come into Italy. In the desolation of the country it seemed as though the Roman Church itself would perish irretrievably, crushed between the upper and the nether millstones. Yet, unarmed and alone, it was able to found its power on the ruins of Arian and Pagan barbarism and of Byzantine autocracy. The old Roman policy of *Divide et Impera* still helped to protect the last institution which kept alive the Roman spirit.

The Lombard invasion immediately reduced the power of the Emperor in Rome itself. The city and its territory, the so-called *Ducatus Romae*, was cut off from the seat of the government of Italy, which soon lost any real authority over territories which it was unable to protect. Embassies in vain solicited help from Constantinople, and the Italians, thus deprived of the support of their rulers, were thrown back on their own resources and ability. The remnants of the Gothic and of the Italian people united to form a new nation, which gradually absorbed and civilized the invaders. In 579 a Goth, Pelagius II, was elected Pope during the first siege of Rome by the Lombards, and was able to prove that some advantages might be drawn from present misery. Justinian had resolutely claimed the right of confirming the Papal election, and thus no Pope was consecrated until an embassy had been sent to and had returned from the capital. But in this case the siege rendered such a course impracticable and put a temporary end to the Imperial prerogative. Pelagius was consecrated without Imperial confirmation.

In 573 Alboin was murdered and his kingdom passed through the recurrent cycles of dissolution and reunion characteristic of the Germanic peoples. Each leader became more or less independent of the government at Pavia, and assumed the title of Duke, which had been borne by the governors of the Byzantine provinces. Rome was threatened from the North and from the South by the Duchies of Spoleto and of Beneventum, but fortunately their operations were not co-ordinated and the

Duchy of Beneventum, the most dangerous, was itself threatened by the Byzantine Duke or Doge of Naples. The territory of Rome, what was later to become the Patrimony of St Peter, was also known as a Duchy, but there is no evidence to show that it was governed by a Duke;[1] we occasionally hear of the civic government with the posts of prefect and of vicar of the city, and occasionally of the Roman army, probably a civic militia. Rome was left to herself, which was tantamount to being left to the Pope. Just before the beginning of the first siege in 579 an embassy of Romans, led by a senator, Pamphronius, was sent to Constantinople with 300 lb. of gold to implore the Emperor to send some help. Justin was magnanimous enough to refuse the gift; his devotion is attested by the golden cross which is still in the treasury of St Peter's, and in the place of troops he gave some very good advice. He suggested that the gold might be used to bribe the Lombard chieftains, and that the Franks might be induced to attack their new neighbours. Both counsels were acted upon; the Dukes were persuaded to withdraw from the City, and Childebert, the descendant of Clovis, thrice invaded Northern Italy. The practical results of his intervention were disastrous, since he only added to the distress of the country and caused the Lombard chiefs to sink their personal jealousies and elect an able King, Autharis, who, after the withdrawal of the Franks, extended the Lombard dominions still farther.

[1] Tomassetti, *Campagna Romana*, Roma 1910, I, p. 119, affirms not only that there was no *Dux Romae*, but that what was known by analogy as the *Ducatus* was really called the *circuitus urbis*.

The Popes, however, were shown whence they might eventually find help.

The preservation of Rome is largely due to St Gregory I (590-604). If we were to consider only the actions of his Pontificate we might be tempted to deny him the title of Great, for, with the exception of the spiritual conquest of England, his general policy, both in the East and in the West, was not a success. His attempts to reform the Gallican clergy failed owing to the indifference and hostility of the degenerate Frankish Kings, while he was not able to bring to a satisfactory conclusion the contest with Constantinople, inherited from his predecessor Pelagius, concerning John the Faster's assumption of the title of Oecumenical Patriarch. But the man himself, the saint, the writer, and the organizer, succeeded in commanding a respect so universal that it greatly increased the authority of his See. If we compare the Homilies, the Dialogues, the Regula Pastoralis with the great works of a preceding age, with those of Augustine or of Leo, we can well measure the decadence of the time. Gregory, however, gave the people what they wanted; we consider his writings prolix, barbarous, childish, and superstitious, but they undoubtedly exerted an immense influence over his own and subsequent generations. Abandoned by his Emperor, he found himself obliged to administer the territory of Rome and to treat with the Lombard kings and dukes. As Leo had repulsed Attila with spiritual and financial arguments, so Gregory bought or converted the Lombard chieftains who came against him. He reorganized the patrimony of

the Church, and was thus able to dispose of sufficient wealth for the needs of the city, for which, as a scion of an old patrician family, he felt a great personal love. As a former prefect of the city, he was well acquainted with the details of administration; as a former monk, he was able to employ most profitably the force of monasticism. He has been blamed for his adulation of those blood-stained tyrants, Brunhilda and Phocas, but a drowning man will catch at any straw. He was surrounded by dangers so great that he could not make use of the thunders of an Ambrose or an Athanasius. In theory he did not assume any civil powers, indeed he avoided as far as possible all temporal embarrassments, but in the eyes of the Lombards the Papacy was practically an independent power by the side of the Exarch. When he at last succeeded in 598 in negotiating a truce between the Empire and King Agilulf, his signature to the document was requested by the barbarians: Gregory, however, refused to guarantee a treaty which he was equally powerless to violate or to protect.

The material prosperity of Rome was perhaps at its lowest in the second half of the sixth century, but after that period conditions began to improve slowly. Gradually the invaders were brought into the Church, partly by the efforts of St Gregory, of St Columban, and of Queen Theodolinda. The destruction of the monasteries ceased, a more stable government was inaugurated, a code of laws, imperfect and barbaric yet always preferable to anarchy, regulated the lives of the invaders, while their subjects were still allowed the use of Roman law, which

was probably administered by their bishop. The gifts which the Lombards received from Rome, Ravenna, and Constantinople, and the treasures which they themselves plundered, gave them a certain artistic taste and knowledge and insensibly modified their native decoration and jewellery. This process of civilization lasted nearly two hundred years and by the middle of the eighth century, when the kingdom fell, it was almost completed. The piety of the dukes had rebuilt Farfa and Montecassino; Faroaldus II, Duke of Spoleto, ended his life in the monastery of Ferentillo, which he had himself founded; the Abbey of Nonantola was becoming the greatest ecclesiastical principality in Upper Italy. The Lombards assumed some of the civilization of the Latin population; the Latins were infected by much of the barbarism of their conquerors. The Italian nation was being formed.

At the same time Rome itself recovered to a certain extent from the effects of war, pestilence, and famine. The transformation of the ancient city was completed, and the derelict monuments of former greatness were either turned into churches and dwellings or destroyed in order to obtain materials for new constructions. The Byzantine yoke was heavy, for its officials were extortionate, but the poverty of the country was a safeguard against rapacity and the Church received or assumed a large measure of independence. The Pontificate of Honorius I (625-638) was a period of comparative peace and splendour, as is proved by the numerous churches, notably St Agnese, which he built and decorated. He was not so fortunate in his foreign

relations: Adaloaldus, the Catholic son of Theodolinda, was deposed and an Arian King renewed the persecution; in Britain the pagan reaction seemed for a moment likely to undo the work of Gregory and Augustine, while the active Irish Church, in opposition to Rome, spread over all the coasts of the North Sea; in the East the campaigns of Heraclius against the Saracens renewed the disputes about the Incarnation of Christ. The Emperor, unimpressed by the failure of all previous efforts, determined to reconcile the Monophysites by a new formula. He consulted his bishops whether the Christ, one person and two natures, was moved by a single or by a double will. The voice of a monarch who had recovered the Holy Cross was listened to with respect, and in 638 a decree known as the Ecthesis imposed the doctrine of the Single Will of Christ on the Universal Church. The Pope, though he did not formally approve it, avoided condemning the Monothelitic creed of the sovereign. He died during the course of the same year, and his successors, mindful of the dignity of Chalcedon, firmly rejected the innovation.

Constans II, a descendant of Heraclius, attempted in 648 to end this vain controversy by the Type, an edict which, without deciding the matter, tried to enjoin silence on the Church. The orthodox party refused to compromise with error; in 649 Pope Martin I convoked a great Council in the Lateran. It solemnly proclaimed the Double Will of Christ to be the faith of the Church, and condemned with equal vigour the impious heresy of the grandfather and the culpable silence of the grandson.

The Exarch had come from Ravenna with orders to secure the Pope's assent to the Type, but he seems to have come alone; the native garrison of Rome was devoted to its bishop and the Imperial representative was forced to retire to Ravenna. Vengeance was not long delayed: in 653 another Exarch appeared in Rome at the head of an army. The population was overawed by this display of force, and amidst the curses of priests and people the heroic Martin was arrested and sent into exile in the wilderness of the Tauric Chersonese, where he soon expired of hunger and want, the last Pope to suffer from Byzantine persecution. Constans was unpopular in his own capital and, after checking the Saracens in the East, decided to stem their dangerous activities in the West. In 662 he arrived in Sicily and reorganized on statesmanlike lines the administration of Southern Italy. After a fruitless attempt to reduce the city and Duchy of Beneventum he marched on Rome, where he was received by Pope Vitalian with equal honour and trepidation. The Emperor, however, knew that his schemes for the preservation of his Western dominions were unrealizable without the support of the Roman Church: the Monotheletic controversy, the Type, and the martyrdom of Pope Martin were subjects avoided by mutual consent, for Vitalian was wise enough not to provoke a short-tempered sovereign who was at the head of twenty thousand men. Rome suffered nothing worse than a final spoliation of its last remaining bronze statues and metal ornaments, and this material loss was more than compensated by a new and far-reaching spiritual victory. In 664,

at a great Council held at Whitby, two devoted adherents of Rome, who had often made their pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles, Wilfrid of York and Benedict Biscop, triumphed completely over their Irish rivals. Pope Vitalian, in 669, followed up the victory by sending a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus, to reorganize the English Church. Theodore's work belongs to English history, and its importance for the Apostolic See is due not so much to its completion of the work of Augustine as to its arresting the growth of the Irish Church. St Columban and his followers had created a powerful organization which, in its virtues as in its defects, was characteristically Celtic, profoundly mystical and intolerant of all discipline. For a short time it seemed as though Rome might be defeated by its missionaries. The victory of Whitby and the ensuing ecclesiastical work of Theodore firmly established the spiritual dominion of Rome over the whole of the semi-barbarian North.

The Saracen invasion soon forced the Byzantine Emperors to reconstitute the unity of Christendom, which had been once again endangered by the imprudent Ecthesis of Heraclius. In 680 Constantine Pogonatus convoked the Sixth General Council, the third to be held at Constantinople. The Monophysite provinces had by that time been irretrievably lost, and it was therefore useless to maintain any longer a detested edict which had been proclaimed only in the hopes of conciliating them. The Italian provinces were threatened by three enemies, the Lombards, the Saracens, and the Exarchs, who were often tempted to rebel against the authority

of a distant government. The Popes had loyally supported the Empire against all three enemies, and so greatly had their power increased in Italy itself that if the Western provinces were to be retained the East had to bow to the theology of Rome. The Council condemned the Monothelitic heresy, and anathematized the memory of all who had supported it or who had not openly condemned it.

The growing power of the Papacy was soon to be put to the test. Constantine had placed his two sons under the protection of St Peter, and had sent locks of their hair to Rome as a symbol of their spiritual adoption. Justinian II proved himself to be a rebellious son and a bloodthirsty tyrant. In the same room of the palace in which the former Council had assembled he convoked, in 692, another Synod, known as the Council of the Trullo or the Quinisext, which is still accepted by the Eastern and execrated by the Western Church. It produced one hundred and two canons of ecclesiastical discipline, nearly all of which reveal a strongly anti-Roman tendency. Pope Sergius refused to accept them, and the Emperor attempted to treat him as his predecessors had treated Vigilius and Martin. The Protospatharius Zacharias received orders to go to Rome and seize the Pope. But the times had changed; Ravenna and the cities of the Pentapolis rose in open revolt, and their civic militia marched on Rome to defend their spiritual father. The Imperial envoy had to be protected from their fury by the person whom he had come to arrest, and fled in secret from the city. In 705 the mutilated

tyrant, who had recovered his throne after an exile of ten years, was able to punish the Italian provinces, but he invited Pope Constantine to the East and confirmed the privileges of the Apostolic See.

Philippicus Bardanes is only remembered with gratitude as the deliverer of his country from the rule of a tyrant. In 711 he brought to a violent end the dynasty of Heraclius, which had ruled the Roman Empire during a fateful century. He himself attempted to restore Monothelitism, whereupon Rome rose in revolt and, notwithstanding the efforts of the Pope to restore order, a civil war was carried on between two factions until the arrival of the news of the Emperor's deposition. The anarchy of the Age of Darkness was giving place to the turbulence of the Middle Ages.

A second Gregory (715-731) undertook to extend and complete the work of his great namesake. The newly conquered England furnished the means for new conquests. Irish missionaries had already laboured in the forests of Germany, and the zeal of the English converts was directed by Rome in the same direction. The Pope blessed and consecrated Winfrith, better known as St Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, and sent him out to conquer in the name of Rome. As Archbishop of Mainz and Primate of Germany, he received the pallium from the tomb of St Peter and the rights and dignities of a Papal legate. His authority extended over both banks of the Rhine and brought about a renewal of the intercourse between Rome and the great Frankish monarchy, where Pepin of Héristal and his son, Charles Martel, had created a firm

government under the shadow of the degenerate descendants of Clovis.

The Lombard rule by the beginning of the eighth century was no longer offensive to the Italian population; the invaders had become civilized and pious, and they were ruled by Liutprand, the best and ablest of their kings. On the other hand, the almost imperceptible growth of an Italian consciousness made the rule of Byzantium seem more foreign and oppressive. The Emperor Leo III, the great founder of the Isaurian dynasty, needed money for the defence of the East against the Saracens, and imposed new taxes on his Italian dominions. The general discontent was further increased by the news of the Emperor's first edict against the worship of images, which the Pope opposed with firmness. The attempts of the Imperial officials to seize Gregory were frustrated by the populace, and in 727 Ravenna and the Pentapolis rose in rebellion while the Duchy of Rome refused to pay the taxes. Liutprand was desirous to profit by the dissensions; he conquered part of the Pentapolis and marched against Ravenna; then, forming an alliance with the Exarch, he marched against Rome. The Pope succeeded, however, in pacifying him, and the King actually yielded Sutri, which he had just conquered, to St Peter, thus laying the foundation of the Temporal Power of the Popes. Under the reign of Gregory III (731-741) Liutprand once more attacked and captured Ravenna, which was recaptured by an Imperial and Venetian fleet, and again came against Rome and again withdrew. Pope Zacharias visited the powerful King, who had at

last succeeded in overcoming the Duchies of Spoleto and Beneventum, which the Popes had stirred to rebellion. He was well received, and the nascent States of the Church were further enriched by the gift of cities taken from the Emperor or from the rebels. When Liutprand died in 744 the Church lost its greatest enemy and its greatest benefactor.

The negotiations between the Lombard King and the Popes were complicated and apparently contradictory, since both parties were in a difficult and delicate position. The Popes, strongly hostile to the iconoclastic Emperors, by whom they were considered as semi-rebellious subjects, remained for a long time the upholders of the Byzantine connexion. The King, instead of punishing the intrigues of the Popes which had caused the revolt of Spoleto and Beneventum, ever conferred greater benefits on the Apostolic See. His motive is clear: he aimed at driving the Greeks out of Italy and at creating a stable Lombard and Italian kingdom. This could be done only with the concurrence and support of the Popes, and he may have hoped that this might be eventually obtained by kindness and generosity. He was mistaken. The Popes had little reason to love Byzantium, but they were far more terrified at the growth of the Lombard power. From the eighth century down to 1860 the Papacy followed a single temporal policy, the failure of which in the last century produced the Roman question: the formation of a strong and united Italian State was to be avoided at all costs. It must be frankly admitted that this policy, which was usually quite unconscious, was the only one by

which the Church could have preserved its international and supernational character. The universal rights, duties, and jurisdiction, which were claimed in virtue of the Primacy of St Peter, could be freely exercised only when the person of the Pope, and therefore Rome itself, was not threatened by a strong secular power. A strong Italian kingdom would inevitably have threatened the Papal independence, and might have reduced the Italian Church, and consequently the Apostolic See itself, to the condition of a national, not a universal Church. It was in obedience to this policy, as we shall see, that the Popes favoured in every way the rise of free cities and small states. It naturally also led to the Temporal Power with its inevitable disadvantages, but such an idea was still only dimly conceived in the eighth century. The Popes still considered that Rome had to be ruled by some sort of secular authority, but they wished that authority to be distant and weak rather than near and strong. Byzantium was heretical and tyrannous, but its power in Italy had passed away; there was little danger that the Emperor would be able to seize the Pope and enforce Iconoclasm. The Lombards were orthodox and pious: had it not been for the policy of the Popes they might have formed a State as compact and as powerful as France itself, and the Italian nation might now have a tradition of eleven centuries, instead of seventy years. Italy was obliged to sacrifice its political prosperity in order to ensure the universal character of a Church that is still the greatest of all the great creations of Italian genius.

The Popes attempted to the very end to preserve their connexion with New Rome. It was only when there was no prospect of help from Constantinople that Gregory III appealed in 739 for support to the Franks, whose intervention in a similar occasion had already been advised by Justin II. Charles Martel was, however, too much occupied with his campaigns against the Saracens to be able to send any assistance, and the Pope, when he had succeeded in placating Liutprand, was probably glad that the Franks had been unable to move. Charles's son, Pepin, inaugurated a period of more intimate relations with the Apostolic See. He had deposed Childeric III, the last of the Merovingians, and he wished to have the usurpation ratified by divine approval, which was easily granted by the politic Zacharias on the recommendation of St Boniface. Rome needed a strong ally. The new Lombard King, Aistulf, resumed the war against the Greeks with all Liutprand's vigour and none of his respect for the Church. He captured Ravenna and all its territories, and announced his intention to seize the Roman Duchy. It was at that moment that the new Pope, Stephen III, received the news that a Council in Constantinople had definitely approved the Iconoclastic heresy. It was therefore impossible to look to the East for help, and he set out in 754 on a journey which was destined to change the history of the world. At Quierzy he was received by the King of the Franks as the successor of the Apostle, and a satisfactory alliance was soon concluded. A Frankish army entered Italy, and Aistulf was forced to surrender his conquests, which were handed over

to the Pope, perhaps as the representative of the Eastern Emperor.

The consequences of the Frankish intervention are well known and were indeed inevitable, though they were probably not foreseen either by Pepin or by Stephen. The Lombards repeatedly rebelled, and Pepin's son Charles was forced to extinguish their kingdom, the crown of which he himself assumed. The actions of the two Kings were justified constitutionally by the Pope's granting them the Patrician title. The political and religious conquest of Eastern Germany and the close alliance with the Frankish monarchy forced the Popes to be more and more drawn towards the West, their natural domain. The belated condemnation of Iconoclasm at the Council of Nicea in 787 did little to restore the balance: the separation of the West from the East was not any longer due to dogmatic differences. As the century drew to its close men must have begun to feel that a new age was about to be born. The news that the Emperor Constantine had been deposed by his mother, Irene, furnished a plausible excuse. In the winter of the last year of the century the Patrician Charles came to Rome and, during Mass in St Peter's on the birthday of the Saviour, Pope Leo III placed a crown on his head, while the assembled people cried out: 'To Carolus Augustus, crowned by God, great and pacific Emperor, be life and victory.'

CHAPTER VIII

THE EMPIRE OF CHARLEMAGNE

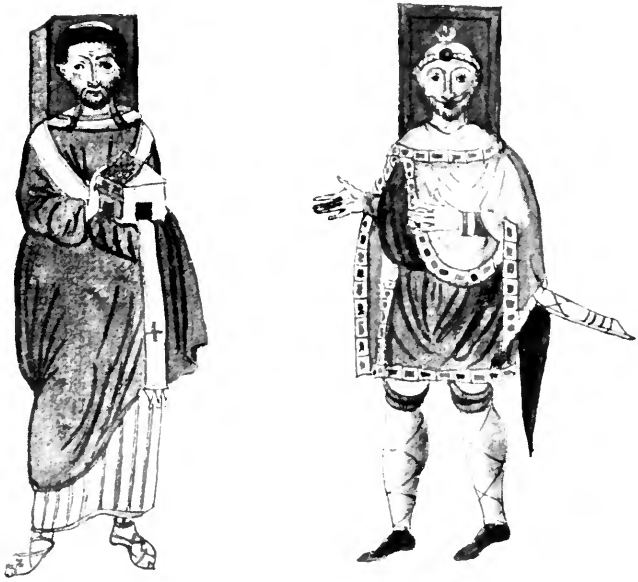
Laetantur cum primatibus minores civitatis, cum afflicto paupere exultant agmina viduarum, quia novus imperator dat jura populis, dat jura novus papa.

Vita Antiquior S. Adalberti, c. 21.

THE coronation of Charlemagne has rightly been described as ' one of those very few events of which, taking them singly, it may be said that, if they had not happened, the history of the world would have been different.'[1] For the next thousand years the successors of Charles, together with the successors of St Peter, form the warp of the confused yet fascinating tapestry of European history. The restoration of the Roman Empire in the West had undoubtedly been prepared by the events of the preceding centuries, yet the consequences of this restoration, and even of the very way in which it was carried out, may be considered as still influencing our lives and thought.

The first and most tangible result was the final separation of the West from the East. Such a result, which to us appears inevitable, was not, and could not have been, foreseen either by the Pope or by Charles. The Roman Empire, like the Christian Church, was one and indivisible: Charles was the successor of Augustus, of Constantine, of Theo-

[1] Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*, chap. v.



POPE LEO III AND CHARLEMAGNE

A COPY OF THE APSIDAL MOSAICS EXECUTED BY LEO III IN THE CHURCH OF STA SUSANNA IN ROME, OF WHICH CHURCH HE HAD BEEN A PRIEST, AND DESTROYED BY CARDINAL RUSTICUCCI IN 1598

From the drawing in the Vatican Library (*Cod. Barb. Lat.* 2062)

dosius, of Justinian, not of purely Western Emperors such as Honorius or Romulus Augustulus; he was the Roman Emperor, not the Emperor of the West, and the coronation was later described as 'the translation of the Empire from the Greeks to the Franks.' From a strictly constitutional point of view the event was not illegal and not even unprecedented. The Empire was elective, and its citizens always retained their constitutional right of deposing the reigning Emperor and of electing a new one in his stead. Nero's death had revealed the political secret that an Emperor could be created elsewhere than at Rome, and, since in the eighth century all Christians were Romans and all Romans were Christians, any Christian, anywhere, could be proclaimed Emperor. The Italian provinces had frequently been rebellious; after the murder of Constans II at Syracuse in 668 the Sicilian legions had invested with the purple an Armenian youth, Mizizios. The Western provinces believed that Irene, through the deposition and murder of her own son, the legitimate Emperor Constantine VI, and by the assumption of the government in person, had rendered vacant the Imperial throne. It is not certain whether a woman was excluded by her sex from the Principate,[1] but, even had the Pope and his advisers been wrong in law, the Western provinces certainly had the right to depose Irene and to set up an Emperor of their own; their action would be justified if their candidate succeeded in supplanting his rival. But by 800 A.D. the Roman

[1] Mommsen, *Staatsrecht*, ii, 788, but see Bury, *Later Empire*, i, 9.

Empire, Christian and Universal, had already ceased to exist; it could not be transferred to the West, for there was nothing to transfer. Had the Empire been still alive, Carolus Augustus, Emperor of Rome, would have marched against those Eastern provinces which did not acknowledge his rule, as Constantine had marched against Licinius. It speaks highly for his genius and still more for his common-sense that, unlike his successors, his new dignity did not make him waste his energies in the pursuit of a vain phantom. He knew that, whatever his position might be in theory, it was impossible to force the East to recognize it, and that his Germans were more profitably employed in fighting Saracens, Saxons, Wends, and Avars on their own frontiers than in a hopeless attempt to govern Constantinople.

Eginhardt is probably correct in stating that the Pope's action came as a surprise, and a not altogether welcome surprise, to Charles. It must, of course, have been prepared long beforehand, but Charles may have been desirous of first negotiating with Constantinople, in the hopes that some legal fiction might be found by which the theoretic unity of the Empire would have been preserved and which would have rendered him the colleague and not the rival of the Byzantine Caesar. These hopes would have almost certainly been disappointed, for the Byzantines still continued to cling to those rights which they could no longer exercise. In any event, the unity of the Empire would have ultimately been broken. Two rival Empires claimed, with about equal right, to govern the whole of Christendom.

The restoration of the Empire in the West was, to a certain extent, the burial of that ideal of Catholicity which was the justification of the Empire itself, and this destruction of the political catholicity of the world was naturally followed by the destruction of its spiritual unity. It is indeed remarkable that more than two centuries were to elapse before the final and formal breach, when in 1054 the Papal legate excommunicated the Patriarch Michael Cerularius and shook from off his feet the dust of St Sophia.

The continued survival of the Eastern Empire did not check, however, the evolution of the Imperial idea in the West. The jurists who supported with learned arguments the claims of the Hohenstaufen, who asserted that the Sacred Caesarian Majesty was, in temporal matters, the divinely appointed ruler of the world, ignore, rather than refute, the rival claims of Constantinople, which seem so serious to our eyes. Among the many extraordinary omissions of Dante, the greatest and most orthodox supporter of the medieval Empire, is that of any discussion of the status and claims of the Eastern Emperors. When in 1204 the arms of the Crusaders perfidiously overturned the Byzantine throne, the Western Emperor might have claimed for himself the conquered territories. The men of the Fourth Crusade, however, were above all things realists; they knew that the unity of Christendom could not be restored even in theory, and without a restoration of its political unity any attempt to restore its spiritual unity was bound to fail.

The coronation of Charles was the first visible defeat of that ideal of spiritual and political catholicity which was to be destroyed, apparently for ever, by the Reformation. The sublime conception of the equality and brotherhood of all men, of whom God Himself was one, has always been opposed and rendered vain by the apathy, the selfishness, and the vices of the individual, whether person, people, or race. The division of Christendom along a line of cleavage that had always been apparent was soon followed by the rise of France, the first nationalist State.

The ideal of the Just and Peace-giving Emperor who, as representative of the King of kings, *securus judicat orbem terrarum*, before whom all people, nations, and languages, are equal, who strives to make the Kingdom of the World a faithful image of the Kingdom of God, is indeed distant from the mind or aspirations of modern Europe. Yet the fact that at all times men have been ready to sacrifice everything, wealth, life, country, in a vain attempt to realize such an ideal is in itself a justification of the human race.

The actual ceremony of the coronation was fraught with the most momentous consequences. In ancient Rome the Emperors had never dared to make use of the diadem, that odious symbol of despotism,[1] and the prince was either elected and proclaimed by the voice of the Senate, the armies, and the people, or had been previously made a partner and co-regent by his predecessor. When Diocletian and Constantine introduced the crown from Persia, where

[1] It is said to have been worn by Aurelian (Victor, *Epit.* 35,5).

it was placed on the King's head by the High Priest as representative of the Magian religion, some formality and solemnity was felt to be necessary on the occasion of its first assumption. Since the crown always remained theoretically elective, it should have been conferred by a representative of the electoral body, Senate, army, and people. The coronation was indeed sometimes performed by a layman, but such a procedure was dangerous, inasmuch as it exposed the selected official not only to the suspicions of his sovereign, but also to the envy of his colleagues. During the fifth century the problem was solved by assigning this duty to the Patriarch, a high officer of State who, however, was not feared or envied either by the Emperor or by the great military or civil officials. Coronation by the Patriarch was usual, but by no means indispensable, the Emperor himself crowned his son when he associated him in the Empire. The Patriarch acted only as the representative of the State, of the electoral body, not of the Church, and still less of God. Similarly, when the Archbishop of Canterbury crowns an English King he is merely a great officer of State who accomplishes an ancient and traditional piece of pageantry; the ceremony confers no new powers, either spiritual or temporal.

It may be that Charles would have desired to assume the crown with a ceremonial more similar to that of the Byzantine court. He himself returned to the Roman precedents when, soon before his death, he placed the crown on the head of his son and successor Lewis, who, however, tacitly recog-

nized the illegality of this coronation by asking Pope Stephen IV to consecrate him again at Rheims. The act of Pope Leo was unprecedented, but it is unlikely that either the Pope or the Emperor had any clear idea of what they were doing, still less that the very details of the coronation would later be used to support a struggle between their successors. The coronation of Charles is best considered as the necessary and inevitable result of a pre-existing state of affairs, and the Pope was thus the necessary, but impersonal, instrument of the Divine Providence. But the Pope was the chief actor in the drama, and indeed without him it would not have taken place at all; he acted as the representative not of the people or State, as at Constantinople, not even of the Church as in Persia, but of God Himself. The impersonal character of his action was a theory which in no case could have ever survived very long, and its place was soon taken by others, more adapted to the medieval mind, drawn from the example of the Jewish theocracy. To the authority vested in the successor of St Peter was soon added the authority of the Hebrew prophets to raise up or to depose the leaders of God's people. The Emperor was 'crowned by God,' the Pope was God's representative on earth, and therefore the Pope was soon able to claim that he had the right of granting or of withholding the crown. On the other hand, the Emperor, as temporal head of the Christian people, had the duty of supporting the Christian Church and the right of controlling, if necessary, its activities.

The principle that all political power was origin-

ally derived from the people was always admitted by jurists, but it was gradually obscured by theocratic ideas, fostered for different and conflicting reasons by Pope and Emperor. The temporal and the spiritual powers were considered parallel and complementary, and therefore, since the latter was undoubtedly of Divine origin, God, rather than the popular will, came to be considered the source of the former, a doctrine which leads on the one hand to the ' Divine Right of Kings,' on the other to the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal power. The Emperor was thus directly responsible to God, by whom he had been crowned; his chief duty at home was to see that his people enjoyed the blessings of temporal and spiritual peace, to protect the Church and, if necessary, to maintain its purity and order, to convoke, as head of Christendom, the General Council, and, at home or abroad, to persecute the enemies and to propagate the doctrines of the Christian religion. At the end of the eighteenth century the Habsburg monarch, who was the hundred and twenty-second and last successor of Julius Caesar, still called himself ' Advocate of the Christian Church, Vicar of Christ, Imperial Head of the Faithful, Leader of the Christian Army, Protector of Palestine, of General Councils, of the Catholic Faith.'

The rights of the Emperor over the Church were fully admitted by Rome, indeed the necessity of a temporal protector was the chief reason for which the Church had accepted the peace of Constantine and had renewed the Empire in the West in the person of Charles. Charlemagne made a vigorous

use of his rights, interfering in the minutiae of discipline and even of dogma, and his actions were applauded officially, and perhaps even sincerely, by the Pontiffs. Church and Empire, both universal, were mutually indispensable, the temporary strength of the one could correct the temporary weakness of the other, and the fall of the medieval Empire heralded the fall of the Universal Church.

The Pope was recognized by everyone as the spiritual head of the Christian polity, but his position as a man was less clearly defined. As the Emperor was within, not above, the Church, so the Pope could be considered as within, not above, the Empire. As a churchman he could claim exemption from the ordinary civil jurisdiction, and Leo III's supposed assertion that the Pope can be judged by God alone, and not by any human tribunal, whether ecclesiastic or lay, has been commemorated by a famous fresco in the Vatican Stanze. More important still is the consideration of the Papal authority in Rome itself. We have already seen how the first origins of the ecclesiastical state may be found in Pepin's donation to St Peter of certain cities of the Pentapolis and the Exarchate, which later allowed the Popes to claim all the Italian possessions of Byzantium. We should remember, however, that the Papacy was, like the Empire, a moral jurisdiction rather than a temporal dominion. The Imperial authority over the Empire was similar to the Papal authority over the Church; neither required, in theory, a territorial basis. The authority of a Gregory XVI over the Church of Christ was very different from the rule of the same Pope in the Papal

States or in the Legations of Romagna. The authority of Charles, the Roman Emperor, was quite different from that of Charles, the King of the Franks and Lombards. Rome he had ruled, even before his coronation, as a Patricius, and, had the renewal of the Roman Empire been followed by the re-establishment of Rome as the political seat of the government, the course of history might have been changed. Rome, however, was a spiritual and not a political capital; its situation was as inconvenient in the ninth century as it had been in the fourth, and Charles placed his seat and Court at Aachen, in the centre of his Germanic dominions. The creation of an Italian kingdom for his son Pepin involved only the former Lombard possessions and not those that had belonged to the Byzantine crown. In 844 Lewis II, the great-grandson of Charles, was crowned King of Italy by Pope Sergius II, but Pope and citizens refused to swear allegiance to him since they depended from the Emperor alone. The gifts of Pepin and Charles to the Holy See, gifts which were confirmed and extended by their successors, should be considered endowments rather than cessions; the Pope enjoyed a usufruct and administration of these territories, not an actual sovereignty. The Romans, and the Pope himself, swore obedience to the Emperor, who was represented in the city by his *missus*, and who always claimed the supreme judicial authority. But the Emperor was distant and powerless, the Italian kingdom soon fell into complete anarchy, and thus the Popes were able to change their administration into a sovereignty, which for a long time remained indefinite, opposed

not only by the Emperor but also at times by the Roman people. On the death of Charles, Leo III ordered the execution of certain Roman citizens without consulting the Imperial tribunals, and his successors, by hurried elections, sought to emancipate themselves from the obligation of receiving the Imperial consent. The government of Rome remained for a long time in the hands of the person who happened to be the strongest in the city: it is as yet too early to speak of a definite Temporal Power of the Popes which, as a definite, autonomous, and unquestioned sovereignty was to appear only many centuries later. The Emperor remained in theory the lord of Rome, and if he were present in the city with a sufficient force, he might occasionally both govern and rule.

The two centuries of anarchy which followed the death of Charles make us sometimes forget the greatness of his achievement and its enduring quality. His rule marks the end of the period of invasions and the return to a legal and constitutional rule; in a way it is the birth of modern Europe. The subsequent incursions of Northmen, Saracens, Hungarians, Tartars, Turks, shook but did not destroy the unity of the West. The tide of invasion, which for so many centuries had swept from the East to the West, had come to a standstill and now began to flow in a contrary direction. The Christian world was soon to carry its banners eastwards; the conquest of the Saxons heralded the gradual conquest and partial civilization of the Slavs.

It was fortunate that, before Europe broke up for ever on national lines, the memory of a great

ruler and lawgiver should maintain alive the idea of a supreme and righteous authority, ready to favour the arts of peace, law, and education. The material portion of his work did not survive him, but its spirit should be alive to-day. If the late war may be considered the last of the struggles that followed the partition of the Empire at Verdun, may we not hope that Locarno is the first step in a return to that happy period when, in the fantastic heraldry of a later age, the lilies of France and the eagle of Germany were peacefully united in a single escutcheon?

In the Treasury of Republican Vienna the regalia of the Holy Roman Empire lie as in a tomb. Among the few monuments that can be connected with the founder of the Empire the most interesting is the sword of state, and it is with surprise that we notice that the symbol of temporal authority over the Christian people is a curious Oriental scimitar. It is said to have been the gift of the Caliph Harun-al-Raschid to Charlemagne.[1] This visible memorial of the intercourse between the two greatest rulers of their age is not uninstructive; the Caliph and the Emperor are strangely similar. Both were theocratic sovereigns, both were as eminent in the arts of peace as in those of war, and the rule of both was remembered as a golden age during the anarchy of subsequent centuries. Both are alive to-day more as demi-gods of legend than as historical persons, yet these legends are a true reflection of the

[1] Tradition calls it the 'Sword of Attila.' The explanation given above has been doubted, for to me insufficient reasons, by J. Schlosser, *Die Schatzkammer des Kaiserhauses in Wien.* Wien, 1918.

Eastern and of the Western autocracies. Shall we answer the summons of Oliphant to the defence of Christendom and Rome, or shall we follow the Commander of the Faithful into a brothel of Baghdad?

CHAPTER IX

THE DARK AGES

Quae nunc sunt mala, sint olim futura bona.
Erasmus, 'Apotheosis Capnionis.'

THE fall of the Carolingian Empire was inevitable, for it was founded on ideas that were not only unrealizable in practice but foreign even to its own creators. The fairy tales of childhood may colour the imagination of the adult, but they will hardly dominate his practical activity. The new peoples that were even then in course of adolescence inherited Teutonic customs as well as Roman legal ideas. The new wine burst the old bottles. The Germanic principle of equal division among heirs, so foreign to all Roman jurisprudence, was immediately fatal to the Empire, and the battle of Fontenay with the consequent Treaty of Verdun, by which Charles's Empire was divided among his three grandsons, destroyed for ever the practical realization of the Universal Christian monarchy, began the division of Europe on national lines, and inaugurated those dynastic disputes that were to disgrace the world for so many centuries.

Still more important, both to Church and State, was the rise of Feudalism. This extraordinary system, in its full perfection, such as we see it in the Assizes of Jerusalem, perhaps the greatest

creation of the Middle Ages, is together with Gothic architecture almost the only form of civilized human activity which cannot be traced back directly to classical models. Although it was much indebted to Roman and to Teutonic ideas, the system itself was entirely original. It is perhaps best considered as the inevitable result of the confusion and anarchy produced by the collapse of the Roman Empire and the consequent disappearance of all central authority. Ancient political theory was based on the sovereign rights of the whole community of free citizens. Citizenship, with all its rights and duties, was either an accident of birth or a definite concession, it had no connexion with any material considerations. Feudalism, on the other hand, established a close connexion between political rights and the possession of property, that is to say, of land, the only stable form of property in a period of change and revolution. Thus it came to pass that the owner of a piece of land, large or small, became the governor and judge of all those who dwelt on it. It is easy to understand how such a system could develop during a period of unrest and invasion, when military chieftains rewarded their followers with large grants of conquered territories which they were unable to administer or even supervise in person.

Besides the principle of delegated authority, another, that of military service as a kind of payment or rent for the occupation of land, may be traced back to the first settlements of barbarian tribes on the frontiers by the Emperors of the fourth century. It was also natural that the Roman emphy-

teutic tenures[1] should gradually be transformed into military tenures by the scarcity of currency, the rapid impoverishment of the country, and the urgent need of a common military force. At the same time, the few remaining free agriculturists would be more and more inclined to place themselves under the protection of some great landowner who would defend them against all oppression except his own.

Feudalism had many admirable qualities; it may indeed be considered as an almost perfect social system. Recognizing the rights of private property[2] and the existence of class distinctions, it divided the human race into an orderly hierarchy, each division of which had its own rights and its own duties both towards its superiors and towards its inferiors. But, like all medieval ideas, it was utterly unworkable in practice, as indeed are all systems of government which are not founded on force and authority. It is quite impossible to make all people good, though it is just possible to prevent a few people from committing certain specific evil. Feudalism postulated that all men, by natural instinct and respect for law, and not through any constraint or supervision, would do their duty in their own class of life, a supposition which was manifestly absurd. In many cases, no doubt, the relations between the lord and his subjects were as close and affectionate as those between many a

[1] *Emphyteusis*, in Roman law, is a contract by which a lessor conveys real estate to a lessee in perpetuity in return for a yearly rent, canon, or *census*.

[2] There is, unfortunately, only too much truth in Proudhon's famous epigram, *La propriété, c'est le vol.*

Southern family and its negro slaves a hundred years ago, but the system tended inevitably to oppression and anarchy.

The Church formed an essential part of the nascent Feudalism. Charles, the new David, had increased the powers and possessions of bishops and abbots, and had placed the support of the clergy on a legal basis by rendering compulsory the payment of tithes. He and his successors, by thus favouring the rise of a feudal ecclesiastical hierarchy, may have intended to create a body which would oppose the growing power of the lay nobility. At the same time, since Charles, at least, considered the Empire more as a theocracy than as a lay State, he may have hoped that the ecclesiastics would thus depend more and more from the crown, to the ultimate exclusion of Rome. At first it seemed probable that these hopes would be realized. In 830 the German Episcopate, gathered round Lewis the Pious, told Pope Gregory IV quite clearly that they would not allow any Papal interference in the dynastic strife of the Carolingians. The Imperial patronage of the great Lombard monasteries in Italy rendered the Abbey of Farfa, a few miles from Rome, an outpost of the Imperial power, a kind of fortress built against the enemy citadel.

The lay feudalism eventually succeeded in reducing the power of the crown in Germany to an empty shadow: the ecclesiastical feudalism, on the other hand, led to the triumph of Papal autocracy. These two results are only apparently contradictory. The ecclesiastics, unlike the great lay feudatories, were strong only in so far as they were part of the

Church. As temporal princes they suffered from the great and insurmountable defect that their power was not hereditary, and thought of the successor was not, in their case, one of the chief incentives of ambition. The more important dioceses, unlike the great lay benefices, were almost invariably centred in some large town, of democratic temper and turbulence, and the Bishops soon found themselves forced, often against their will, to associate themselves with the desires and aspirations of their citizens. At first they were able to triumph over crown and barons, but they soon saw their temporal power pass into the hands of those burgesses, whose support had ensured their success.[1] They were thus reduced to their inalienable spiritual authority, and to that temporary monopoly of learning which fitted them to be the advisers of temporal princes rather than temporal princes themselves.

The growth of sacerdotalism gave to the clergy all over Europe the consciousness of the importance and strength of their own order, and they were ready to take the field against crown and laity under the command of their natural leader, the Pope. The long struggle of the investitures was a fight for the creation of a definite sacerdotal caste far more than for the definition of those feudal questions actually in dispute. The triumph of the Church was complete, yet this triumph, by increasing the spiritual importance of the hierarchy, to a certain degree lessened its temporal authority and placed upon it an almost superhuman burden. A very wicked man

[1] The history of Aribert, Archbishop of Milan, must have been repeated in many other dioceses.

might be an excellent prince, his very vices and crimes might increase his power and authority. The power of the clergy rested ultimately on their spiritual character, and the corruption and depravity of the monasteries and of the greater dioceses during the ninth and tenth centuries prepared the way for the complete establishment of the Papal authority as the only power which could purify the Church. And we shall see how the intemperate use of its victory caused the Papacy to fall when at the height of its power.

The history of the dissolution of the Carolingian Empire shows how closely the fortunes of Church and State were united. At first, as might have been expected, the gradual decadence of the Imperial authority allowed that of the Popes to become firmer and more apparent. They succeeded in avoiding Imperial confirmation of their elections, and took the lead in the temporal affairs of Italy, which were becoming more and more confused through the Saracen invasions and the progressive independence of the great feudatories. Leo IV placed himself at the head of the league of Rome, Naples, Gaeta, and Amalfi, which in 849 defeated the Saracen fleet at Ostia. At about this time the Papacy may have had some idea of renewing relations with Byzantium. The Saracen danger was pressing, the descendants of Charles were feeble, while at Constantinople the Macedonian dynasty renewed for a time the splendour of the Empire. In the circumstances an understanding might have been possible, since the Saracens menaced the Papal and the Byzantine possessions alike, but both powers were haughty and intractable,

and the irregular elevation of Photius to the Patriarchate gave rise to a long controversy that heralded the final separation of the two Churches. Nicholas I, whose restless energy and unflinching character has been rewarded by posterity with the epithet of Great, asserted the rights of the Apostolic See against Constantinople, Germany, and the Episcopate. Nothing daunted by the presence of the Emperor Lewis II at the head of an army in Italy, and even in Rome, the Pope was able to interfere in the matrimonial affairs of the Emperor's brother, Charles of Lorraine, and to triumph over those two great German prelates, the Archbishops of Cologne and Trier. At the same time, he reduced to complete obedience the Archbishop of Ravenna, Rome's most formidable rival in Italy itself, and gave laws and constitutions to the recently converted Bulgarians. The letters which on this occasion he addressed to King Boris are among the most pleasing documents of that dark time; they show the Pope not only as a statesman but also as a Christian, and prove that Rome had not yet lost the art of ruling nations. In his controversies with the Emperor and the Episcopate he made use of questionable weapons, such as the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, yet there is no reason to suppose that he did not share his contemporaries' belief in their genuineness.

With Nicholas I the Papacy reached for a time the summit of its power. Its success was due to the growing weakness of the Empire which, harassed by the rebellions of its great vassals, was forced to submit to the only moral power that was willing to uphold its unity. In these circumstances it is obvious

that the Papal triumph was precarious, and indeed dangerous to itself, for it was too weak to stand alone. Rome was as yet unable to control events, it was controlled by them. Lacking any temporal strength of its own, it was incapable of taking the place of the Imperial power which it had undermined.

The death of Lewis II in 875 without direct heirs renewed the dynastic strife within the Empire, which was now beginning to separate on national lines. Pope John VIII attempted, with a courage and ability superior to the immediate results, to guide the tornado that threatened to submerge European civilization. Of the uncles of Lewis II, he chose Charles the Bald, King of the West Franks, in the hope, perhaps, of thus preventing the fatal union of Germany and Italy. Far from conceding to the Emperor the right of confirming the Papal election, John VIII first advanced the claim that the Imperial crown was a gift of the Pope, and Charles, whose dynastic rights were not of the strongest, was obliged to recognize this usurpation. Yet the weakness of the Emperor was in the end fatal to the Pope's schemes. Italy, Rome itself, was divided into German and Frankish factions, and the turbulent aristocracy sought, by supporting the cause of Charles's brother Lewis the German, and his children, to render themselves independent of any control whatsoever. While John was trying in every way to stem the growth of feudalism among the tenants of the Church, the Emperor was forced to purchase the support of his barons by allowing them to transform their personal tenures into hereditary possessions.

The Carolingian line came to an end in 888 and left the world in complete anarchy. The nobles flung off the last traces of delegated authority, and rendered themselves completely independent. The unity of Christendom seemed entirely lost, and it was impossible to undertake any concerted action against the most pressing dangers. On the Eastern frontier of the Empire the Slavs burst into open revolt, hordes of Hungarians ravaged and plundered right up to the slopes of the Apennines, the Saracens devastated the whole of Italy, while Rome itself was threatened by the petty duchies and principalities which surrounded it, and was distracted by the feuds and rivalries of its own nobles. The only stable power in Italy was that of Byzantium, the influence of which had greatly increased by the capture of Bari and the creation of the Theme of Lagubardia on the ruins of the Lombard dominions. John VIII opened negotiations with Constantinople and was willing to yield to Photius, for the Pope would have sought help from any quarter, but the Macedonian dynasty, barely strong enough to maintain its Italian possessions, had no intention of plunging into the maelstrom of Italian politics.

The power which the ability of Nicholas I and John VIII had succeeded in creating proved fatal to their successors. Each of the great barons whom a turbulent nobility attempted to raise to the Italian or Imperial throne, desired to legitimate his position by means of a Papal coronation. The Papacy thus fell into the hands of rival factions, who sought to use it for their own ends. A series of phantom Popes accompanied the series of phantom Kings of Italy.

The Roman aristocracy ruled Rome and controlled the Papal elections. For a time Italy was governed by women, an almost inevitable result of the feudal system, which greatly increased the importance of heiresses and matrimonial alliances.[1] Rome itself was held by the two sisters Marozia and Theodora, the respective foundresses of the Tusculan and the Crescenzi families, and for a time the former seemed able to dispose of the Papacy, and consequently of the illusion of the Empire, at her pleasure.

It was in the interests of the aristocracy to preserve this state of anarchy and to prevent the formation of a strong government which would curtail its privileges. When Marozia, *viris necdum satiata*, attempted to take as her third husband the ambitious King of Italy, Hugh of Burgundy, and perhaps elevate him to the Empire, she prepared her way by making her youthful son Pope. But the Roman nobility flew to arms, and, led by Alberic, another son of Marozia, drove Hugh from the city. From 932 till his death in 954, Alberic was supreme in Rome, which, almost for the first and the last time, enjoyed the blessings of freedom and autonomy. Unlike his successors, Arnold of Brescia and Rienzi, Alberic did not attempt to justify his rule by philosophic subtleties or by visions of the departed greatness of the city. His object, the temporal rule of Rome and its immediate surroundings, was modest but attainable. His power rested partly on that of his own family, and partly on that of the other nobles, whose support he was able to obtain

[1] Such was the origin of the Habsburg power: *Bella gerant alii, tu, Felix Austria, nube.*

by allowing them to transform the ecclesiastical lands which they held in emphyteusis into personal hereditary possessions.

Alberic was successful, yet it must be admitted that his rule, had it survived its founder, would have effectually destroyed the moral significance of Rome. The city might have retained its turbulent independence, but it would never have been strong enough to assume its appointed international position. The immediate result of Alberic's rule was that the Papal authority was reduced to a shadow. He would tolerate no master in Rome but himself, and he raised to the Papacy his own faithful creatures. One of his creations, Agapetus, at last succeeded in inviting Otto, the King or Duke of the Saxons, to Italy, perhaps with the knowledge of Alberic who, however, refused to allow the King's emissary, the Archbishop of Mainz, Primate of Germany, to enter Rome and confer with the Pope. Alberic was naturally the enemy of the temporal possessions of the clergy, but he favoured the reform of its morals and the work of St Odo of Cluny, and was able to check the power and shameless immorality of the Abbey of Farfa, the greatest ecclesiastical power in Central Italy.

Yet Alberic seems to have realized that the Pope could not remain for ever a prisoner of the Roman ruler. Just before his own death he caused his son, proudly named Octavian, to become Pope, by the name of John XII; he thus thought, perhaps, to perpetuate his temporal power over the city by uniting it with the spiritual, thus anticipating the ideas of a future age. Both the times and the persons

were unsuitable. John was a youth of twenty-five, and he is usually described as one of the worst of the Popes. In reading the account of the synod which deposed him, we find that the chief accusations were that he hunted, that he had drunk to the devil's health, that, while playing dice, he had called upon pagan divinities, that he had celebrated matins at uncanonical hours. His knowledge of Latin was certainly deplorable, yet his gravest crime, to our eyes, was his youthful weakness, rendered still more serious by his ambiguous position. Not content, like his father, to limit his power to Rome itself, he desired, as Pope, to recover the estates of the Church, and thus came in conflict with the Roman nobles, who had been the chief support of his father. He sought the help of Otto, whom he crowned Emperor in 962, but soon found that he had given himself a master.

German writers have praised the noble altruism of the Saxon and Franconian Emperors, who purified the Church, tending in their bosom the serpent that was to destroy them. Yet their action was dictated more by self-interest than by sincere love for the Church of Christ. Their authority, both in Germany and Italy, rested on their semi-divine character, and they themselves wished to perpetuate the theocracy of Charles. It was therefore necessary that the only power which could convey this sacrosanct authority, that is to say the Papacy, should be itself respectable and under their control. The universality of the Empire was, at the best, a mere reflection of the universality of the Church. The Emperors could not for their own sakes allow the

Papacy to become the hereditary property of a few Roman families. The first action of Otto I was to take away from the Roman people the right of electing the Pope, and in so doing he prepared the way for the Hildebrandine reforms. The Empire could not stand without the Papacy any more than the Papacy could stand without any temporal support, yet it was inevitable that these two powers, Papacy and Empire, mutually indispensable though they were, should always be in conflict. The great Charles had sought to be a new David; he might have remembered that the rule of David prepared the triumph of Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah.

CHAPTER X

THE TRIUMPH AND THE FALL OF THE MEDIEVAL PAPACY

προβᾶσ 'ἐπ 'ἔσχατον θράσους
ὑψηλὸν ἐσ Δίκας βάθρον
προσέπεσες, ὦ τέκνον, πολύ.
πατρῷον δ'ἐκτίνες τιν'ἄθλον.

Sophocles, 'Ant.', 852.

THE history of the long struggle between the Papacy and the Empire, which originated in the eleventh century over the question of the investitures, is fortunately well known, and it is no purpose of mine to examine it in any detail. For over two centuries it filled the European stage, and its conclusion may be considered as marking the end of the Middle Ages. It can be divided into three great periods. The first, or Hildebrandine, comprises the purification of the Church through the active help of the Empire itself, the long fight with Henry IV, the Norman conquest of Southern Italy, and the disputed heritage of the Countess Matilda. It is the period of the controversy over the investitures in its strictest sense, and may be said to begin in 1052, when Nicholas II drew up the constitutions by which the laity and the great body of churchmen were excluded from any share in the Papal elections, and to end in 1122 with the Concordat of Worms, a compromise and a truce rather than a real peace,

THE IMPERIAL CROWN

UNTIL THE FRENCH REVOLUTION THE IMPERIAL REGALIA WERE GUARDED IN NURENBERG

In the Weltliche Schatzkammer in Vienna

but even so a great triumph for the Papacy. In the second period, that of Frederic Barbarossa, the contest was extended and the future of the Empire itself was definitely and irrevocably determined. At certain moments it assumed the character of a national struggle between Italy and Germany, and the triumph of the Lombard cities may be considered the birth of modern Italy. The third period, that of Frederic II, was almost an Italian civil war. The Emperor was far more an Italian than a German sovereign, and he desired not so much the subjugation of Italy as the constitution of a strong Italian kingdom, a dream which, defeated at that time by the mutual jealousies and suspicions of the various Italian cities, was to be realized only seven centuries later. Other great events were bound up with this momentous contest; the Norman conquests of Southern Italy and England, the Crusades, that gave so great an impulse to the spiritual life of the time, the murder of Beket and the long controversies between the Papacy and the English Crown, the destruction of the Albigenses, the Latin conquest of Constantinople, and the foundation of the mendicant orders.

It has often been asserted that the triumph of the Church was entirely due to the spiritual weapons of which the Popes made so frequent and vigorous a use, and that the terrible effects of Papal excommunication are a proof of the piety or the credulity of the age. The thunders of the Church no doubt sounded somewhat more impressive in the days of the Crusades than in those of Voltaire, but their practical and immediate effects were determined by

political far more than by religious considerations. Excommunication was a gun which sometimes went off, sometimes did not go off, and sometimes recoiled on an unwary firer. The idealism and mysticism of the Middle Ages was counterbalanced by a great deal of commonsense and unscrupulousness in practical affairs. The Papacy was, like its Imperial rival, elective, and it was always easy, and sometimes just, to affirm that a particular election was uncanonical and invalid, to depose the reigning Pope and to elect an anti-Pope, even as the Popes deposed Emperors and created anti-Emperors.

The success of the Church in its fight with the Empire was really due to its having from the outset espoused the popular and, as we should say in our modern jargon, the democratic cause. The victory of Gregory VII over Henry IV was really the first victory of the great German feudatories over the Empire, that of Alexander III over Barbarossa, that of the free Italian communes over a German and foreign suzerain. The Pope's intervention in the contest was decisive, inasmuch as it supplied a moral justification for resisting an authority and tyranny which was otherwise established by divine and human law. The men of the Middle Ages were realists, but at the same time were firm believers in law and in the righteousness of established government; a great baron, a rich city, would hesitate before taking up arms against the Lord's Anointed, the successor of Augustus and of Charlemagne. But when the Vicar of Christ on earth excommunicated and deposed the temporal head of Christendom, rebellion became a duty, not a sin.

The Lombard league would have been impossible had it not enjoyed the moral support of Rome. In the same way the power of the Norman and Angevin Kings of England was curbed by the close alliance of the Baronage and the Church, and the English Primates, Anselm, Beket, Langton, defended not only their own order but the common liberties of the realm, and were the natural heads of the popular party. In the contest between Innocent III and John, the victory of the former was ensured by the discontent of the English Barons and people, not by the interdict and excommunication, which John was able to ignore with comparative impunity. The King's submission was simply an able move destined to break, as it effectually did break, the close alliance between the Papacy and the English Baronage.

In this contest with the Empire the Popes gained a complete but a Pyrrhic victory. They had been forced to support, and indeed foment, the disruptive and particularistic tendencies with which they could never be in real sympathy. The Papacy and the Empire were both forced to assume false and uncomfortable positions. The conflict between the two powers, the Spiritual and the Temporal, was inevitable; it was only temporarily avoided by the peace of Constantine and the establishment of the Carolingian Empire, and the growth of feudalism merely precipitated its outbreak and influenced its actual course. It might, no doubt, have been avoided had one power been constantly stronger than the other, as in the East, where, however, the Church gradually lost all independence or vitality, yet preserved, all through the Turkish dominion,

the national sentiment. In the West the strength of both parties caused the contest to be fought to a finish and to become a life and death struggle, which was bound to end in the exhaustion of both the combatants.

In theory, of course, it was merely a matter of precedence. No Pope claimed to govern the world directly and personally, or suggested that the Emperor was not the divinely appointed instrument for such a task. No Emperor asserted that he alone could arrange purely ecclesiastical matters or govern the Church as he governed his own territories. At the most he claimed the right, as representative of the Christian laity, to a measure of supervision and control. Yet it was just because neither side wanted to attack the theoretical position of the other that the controversy could end only in the mutual destruction of the antagonists. In destroying the Imperial power the Church was destroying its own position. The fact that Pope and Emperor, the divinely appointed leaders of the Christian people, were almost invariably open enemies instead of loving colleagues proved that the whole medieval conception of Church and State was fundamentally wrong, and based on false assumptions. The Emperor, who had been anointed by God in order that he might be the buckler of the Church, became a persecutor and a freethinker, and was unable to take any considerable part in the Crusades, the great international movement of the time, of which he should have been the natural head. The Pope who, as head of the Universal Church, rested his power on the twin rocks of authority and catholicity,

was forced to encourage rebellion and nationalism and thus to destroy eventually the spiritual as well as the political catholicity of the world.

It is often stated that this result was due to the excessive claims and pretensions of the Papacy, and that it alone is therefore responsible for the final collapse of its medieval power and authority. This assertion might be true had the struggle been about actual questions of fact, had it really been a controversy over feudal investitures. But the real contest was about something far more important and fundamental: was the State to transform the Church into a docile and submissive instrument of government, or was the Church to free itself completely from any form of lay control and supervision? The problem was as old as Christianity itself; it had inspired Diocletian's policy of persecution and Constantine's one of conciliation, as well as the actions and claims of Damasus and Leo III, of Justinian and the Popes who resisted Lombards and Byzantines, of Charles and the Popes who prepared, effected, and consolidated the new Roman Empire. The Papacy was weak in temporal weapons, but at first enjoyed a practical monopoly of the various forms of learning, and especially of law. Gregory VII and his successors saw that offence is the best form of defence, and carried the war into the territory of their opponents. To defend their own position they were forced to undermine, often with questionable instruments, the theoretical basis of the Imperial power. No other policy was possible, and every new claim that was advanced naturally led to the logical formulation of others. The success

of the Donation of Constantine and of the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals naturally led to the codification of Canon Law, which had been found to be such a useful weapon. The attitude of Gregory VII naturally resulted in that of Innocent III and Boniface VIII. The extravagance of these Papal claims rendered the claims themselves as ephemeral as the power which they produced, and they were tacitly abandoned the moment that the collapse of the whole medieval conception of Church and State forced the Church to find for itself new foundations. Yet the Church was able to gain, at a terrible price it is true, a permanent and indeed essential victory. The Pope no longer pretends that he can raise or depose sovereigns or call upon them to appear before his judgement seat, but no civil government would now attempt to control the lawful activities of the clergy, to define dogmatic matters, or to override canonical elections.

The contest was bound to be ruinous to both antagonists, for they each had to make use of weapons which recoiled on themselves. The great weakness of the Papacy was its complete lack of any temporal power or military strength, although it possessed great moral authority and vast wealth, the collection of which, however, encountered an ever-growing opposition. It was therefore obliged to conduct the warfare by means of allies who, as usual, proved themselves to be both unreliable and a constant source of difficulty. The Popes could call spirits from the vasty deep, but they were not always able to control them after they had materialized. The Empire, on the other hand, lacked the great moral

authority of the Papacy, and in order to make use of its temporal and military strength it had to buy the support of its feudatories by the constant surrender of privileges, a policy which gradually diminished and restricted the authority of the crown. Both powers, in order to secure some transient advantage, were often forced to pursue illogical and inconsistent policies which were to prove a source of endless difficulties to their successors. The Popes succeeded in destroying all central authority in Germany, and the anarchy thus produced prepared the way for the triumph of the Reformation. Hadrian IV introduced feudalism, of which, as an Englishman, he had direct experience, into the Roman Campagna, with the hope, perhaps, of creating a devoted vassalage on whose military power the Popes might rely. His policy was developed by his successors, with the result that for four centuries the Barons of the Campagna were an unmitigated curse to everyone, and one of the chief causes of the economic decline of Rome.

The Emperors tried to curb the power of the German nobles and clergy by favouring the rise of the free Imperial cities: but the rise of the Lombard and Tuscan communes was another matter, and the Hohenstaufens spent their strength in the long struggle against them. The Popes, who looked upon the free cities of Germany with no friendly eye, were in Italy the great supporters of the Communes, but, during the very period of their closest alliance with the Lombard league, attempted in every way to suppress the communal liberties of Rome itself. The Emperors and other sovereigns who wished to

curb the power of the Church sought to promote to the principal Sees their personal friends and supporters, but these very persons, once installed, became, like Beket, the most uncompromising defenders of their order. The Popes, on the other hand, discovered that the anti-Emperors whom they set up, like Otto IV, were by no means tractable when once they were firmly enthroned.

The Papal position was further complicated by the kingdom of Southern Italy and Sicily, the strongest State in the Peninsula, which had been formed by the Normans out of the decaying Lombard, Byzantine and Saracen dominions. This powerful military monarchy was an even greater thorn in the side of the Papacy than the powers it supplanted, which, although always troublesome, had been comparatively feeble. The Popes had to yield to the inevitable, and legalized the position of the Norman conquerors by the time-honoured expedient of investing them with the territories they had seized. The action of the Popes in so doing was justified in law more by a very wide interpretation of the false Donation of Constantine than by the abstract claim to set up or depose monarchs. Till the last century the Popes always claimed to be the suzerains of Southern Italy, but at no time did they ever dream of exercising their rights in person, nor was their claim ever treated very seriously by the various dynasties that governed the realm. A bad title makes a good King, and the Normans, conscious of the weakness of their legal position, were ready to support the Popes against the Emperor, who was a common danger. But they

were uncertain and dangerous allies. The victory of Robert Guiscard was almost as disastrous to Gregory VII as his defeat would have been: Rome was laid in ashes, and the Pope himself, having loved righteousness and hated iniquity, died in exile, practically a prisoner of those very allies who had freed him from the Emperor.

By the marriage of Henry VI, the son of Barbarossa, with Constance, the heiress of the Norman Kings, the house of Hohenstaufen became at once as powerful in Italy as in Germany, and the union of the Imperial crown with that of Southern Italy presented the most formidable danger to the Papacy. The unrelenting hostility and personal animosity with which Pope after Pope persecuted the great and unfortunate Frederic II, the Wonder of the World, was directed far more against the Italian King than against the Roman Emperor. Frederic held Southern Italy as heir of the Normans, and claimed Upper Italy and Tuscany in virtue of his rights as Emperor. Once again the Church was threatened, as in Lombard times, by its greatest danger, the constitution of a strong and united Italy, which for a time seemed likely to be realized. The malevolence of the Popes was displayed to the full and caused a certain revulsion of popular feeling, which was not altogether counterbalanced by the superstitious horror with which Frederic himself was generally regarded. The rule of Innocent III and Gregory IX had been generally oppressive, even for Churchmen, and Rome itself, though always fickle, was more ready to support its temporal than its spiritual sovereign. For a moment it seemed

likely that Frederic would be successful. Careless of Papal excommunications, he appealed to the public opinion of Europe that it might judge the malice and hatred of the various Popes. The verdict of public opinion then, as the judgement of history now, would be on the whole favourable to the great Emperor. In Italy itself he was far more the champion of Italian freedom against the Pope than a foreign and Teutonic oppressor of municipal liberties like his grandfather. He was surrounded by Italian ministers, and called to artistic life the Italian vernacular, in the poetry of which he was himself proficient.

It is not surprising that so many of the most patriotic Italians were the staunch supporters of a foreign dynasty. They quite rightly considered that the political confusion of Italy was largely due to the policy of the Popes and that history and tradition rendered the Emperor the only person who could unite the whole of Italy under one government. The Italian Ghibellines dreamt of an ideal Emperor who should be an Italian by feeling, an Otto III or a Frederic II, whose seat should be in Rome and Italy. The dream was by no means fantastic. Had Frederic II lived another twenty years and been succeeded by a sovereign as able as himself, Italy might have been welded into as national a state as France or England. Yet it may be doubted whether in such a case the Empire itself could have survived. It would have become a purely Italian monarchy, which could no more have claimed to be the heir of the Carolingian Empire than the purely German Empire of Bismarck could claim to

represent the *Heiliges Roemisches Reich*. It would have been as impossible to hold Germany and Italy under one sceptre as it had been for the heirs of Charles to unite France and Germany, or as it would be for the House of Austria to rule Germany and Spain. This fact seems to have been fully realized by Frederic II who, by his two Pragmatic Sanctions, abandoned many of his most important rights in Germany itself, and thus produced the anarchy that was later legalized by the Golden Bull.

The Hohenstaufens attempted to drive the two horses, but were eventually torn to pieces; they lost Germany without gaining Italy. On the death of Frederic in 1250, the Church discovered that it had not merely conquered but in very truth annihilated its antagonist. And almost at once it became apparent that the disappearance of the Empire as a great international power had left the Church itself naked and defenceless. The balance of power had been completely shattered, and the Popes were quite unable to create new and satisfactory arrangements. Charles of Anjou, whom they invested with the Southern kingdom and who succeeded in extinguishing the house of Hohenstaufen, began at once to extend his sway outside the legal frontiers of his kingdom, and, having seized the crown of Frederic II, continued the policy of his former enemies. An Angevin kingdom of Italy would have been as dangerous to the Papacy as a Swabian one, but there was now no great power ready to check the Angevin ambitions. Soon the Popes found that the Empire was a necessity, and sought to reconstruct it, but the new Emperors could no longer

command the formidable power of their Saxon, Franconian, and Swabian predecessors.

The Popes did not realize their own weakness, for the power, which had been wielded with such effect by Innocent III and Gregory IX, was outwardly as imposing as ever. They did not, they could not, see that the Papacy was entirely lacking in any temporal weapons of its own, and that the spiritual ones were useless unless they could evoke troops and armies. The collapse of the Imperial power in Italy had reduced that country to anarchy but had not increased the temporal power of the Pope. It is true that Innocent III, by the Treaty of Neuss, had succeeded in obtaining from Otto IV, who at that moment would have ceded everything, a definite cession of what was later to become the States of the Church, including the Exarchate and Pentapolis, the March of Ancona, the Duchy of Spoleto, and the allodial lands of the Countess Matilda. The Papacy was thus able to base its claim to a temporal sovereignty on a more satisfactory legal instrument than the Donations of Constantine or Pepin, but it was quite unable to govern the territories it had thus legally obtained; only with the greatest difficulty could it maintain its position in Rome itself. Hadrian IV had been obliged to solicit the help of Frederic Barbarossa in order to wrest Rome from the grasp of Arnold of Brescia: Alexander III was an exile from Rome during most of his epic contest with the Empire. Innocent III himself, who, as greatest of the medieval Pontiffs and scion of one of the noblest Roman families, enjoyed an authority in Rome far greater

than that of his predecessors or successors, was once forced to leave the turbulent city. The day of mercenary or standing armies had not yet dawned, and the Popes had none of those arguments which are 'the last resort of Kings'; they did not even have a reliable bodyguard. Claiming to possess the two swords and to be superior to all earthly potentates, they suddenly discovered that their power was a mere edifice of vain words and imaginings, which could be destroyed by a blow from a mailed fist.

France had now become incontestably the most powerful nation in Europe. It had been the traditional supporter of the Papacy, for it had always been suspicious of the German power, but, now that the Empire had been crushed, it was conscious of its own strength. The conflict between Boniface VIII and Philip IV of France was the first conflict of the Universal Church with the new nationalism, and the defeat of the Church was sudden and complete. Neither the Pope nor the King are figures capable of evoking much personal sympathy; in the actual controversy the Pope was perhaps less completely in the wrong than his antagonist, yet the tactics which he adopted, the tactics of his predecessors, at once revealed the weakness of his position. Had the Empire been vigorous, it might have curbed the ambition of the French sovereign. In an earlier age a Papal excommunication might have occasioned the rebellion of the great feudatories of the Crown. But at the beginning of the fourteenth century the great French Baronage and even the Episcopate were both entirely dependent on the King. The conflict could only be resolved by force of arms,

and Boniface could not put a single man-at-arms in the field. In order to overcome some rebellious vassals, what in another monarchy would have been almost an affair of police, he had been forced to proclaim a Crusade, and his very person was not safe even in his native city. When we read the resounding phrases of the famous Bulls *Clericis laicos* and *Unam Sanctam*, the most extravagant claims ever advanced by the Pontiffs, which sought to formulate as a dogma of faith the doctrine of the absolute dominion of the Pope, '*subesse romano pontifici omnem humanam creaturam*,' we cannot fail to be struck by the contrast between the apparent power and the real impotence of Boniface's position. Philip had no need even to call together an army. A couple of hundred brigands, led by a French Chancellor and a Roman noble, overthrew in a single morning the whole marvellous edifice which had been raised by Leo III, Nicholas I, Gregory VII, Alexander III, Innocent III, Gregory IX. The outrage of Anagni,[1] when 'Christ Himself was taken prisoner in His Vicar,' was the death of the medieval Papacy and of all the theological and political ideas on which it was founded. The famous prophecy with which it is said Celestine V foretold the course of Boniface's pontificate might have been used in the time of Charlemagne to describe the history of the then nascent power of the sacerdotal caste: '*intrabit ut vulpis, regnabit ut leo, morietur ut canis*.'

[1] See Renan's wonderful description *Guillaume de Nogaret légiste* in *Etudes sur la politique réligieuse du regne de Philippe le Bel*, and P. Fedele's very careful reconstruction of the actual events in *Bull. Istituto Storico Italiano*, 41 (1921), pp. 195 ff.

THE CAPTURE OF BONIFACE VIII

THE POPE HOLDS A CRUCIFORM RELIQUARY. THE LEADING HORSEMAN IS SCIARRA COLONNA, AS MAY BE SEEN FROM HIS SHIELD

From the contemporary miniature in the Vatican Library (*Cod. Chigi L., 206, c. 158 A*)

CHAPTER XI

THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING

Olim habuit Cypria sua tempora, tempora Mavors
Olim habuit, sua nunc tempora Pallas habet.
Epigram on the election of Leo X.

As the triumph of the Church had been greatly facilitated by its practical monopoly of learning, so its fall was largely determined by the loss of this monopoly. Already, during the thirteenth century, while St Thomas was engaged in reconciling dogmatic theology with Aristotle, and Gregory IX was consolidating the Papal claims by the codification of Canon Law, Frederic II and his followers had begun to attack the Papal position by undermining its very foundations, and their intellectual weapons proved stronger than their temporal ones. The pretensions of Gregory VII and his successors had been successful through their very audacity; they had been formulated by men of courage and learning, they had been unquestioningly, if reluctantly, admitted by the uncritical nobles from beyond the Alps. With the revival of learning among the laity these pretensions were submitted to the careful and searching scrutiny of scholars and jurists. Augustan literature dazzled the eyes of the supporters of the Empire. The discovery of an inscription stimulated the Roman patriots. The *Corpus Juris Civilis* was found to be stronger than

Canon Law, and forged or genuine Decretals. The transcendent authority of the Church was opposed by that transcendent conception of law as an impersonal, almost theological entity, which has always been so popular among Latin peoples. This counter-attack came too late to save the Empire, but it greatly accelerated the fall of the Papacy. Philip IV, in his conflict with Boniface VIII, was supported by his lawyers and by the Parliament of Paris even more than by the French Church and Baronage. The burning of the Papal Bull was the first sign of the intellectual revolution.

The unrest of the time was more political than religious. It was natural that those who wished to free themselves from the authority of both Church and State should listen to the heretical teaching which revived, together with all forms of mental activity, as a natural result of intercourse with foreign countries. The medieval heresies, the Albigenses, Cathars, and Paterines in the West, the Bogomils and Dragovičí of the Balkan Peninsula, the Paulicians of Asia Minor, had all certain tenets in common, and were probably a survival or a revival of early Christian heresies, which had remained more or less dormant during the Dark Ages.[1] They also responded to the curious and sincere mysticism of the time, which expressed

[1] They have usually been thought to have been of Manichaean origin, but are probably a development, influenced by both Manichaean and Gnostic ideas, of the Adoptionists, who held that the Word merely *adopted* the body of the man Jesus, when He was baptized in Jordan. This doctrine is found as early as the first half of the second century in the *Shepherd of Hermas* (Sim. V, vi). See Conybeare, *The Key of Truth* (1898), for the surviving liturgical work of the Paulicians.

itself in the construction of the Gothic cathedrals and in the foundation of the mendicant orders. They could not be a serious danger, for even the most active opponents of the Papacy did not desire a change of doctrine, and they forced the Church to perfect its sacerdotalism by an even greater insistence on the value of the sacraments and by the wonderful dialectic achievements of scholastic philosophy. The destruction of the Albigenses, and later of the Templars, greatly increased the power of the French Kings, while the Church was validly protected by its faithful ' Watch Dogs,' the Dominicans.

The speculations and researches of the jurists who sought to restrict ecclesiastical authority were far more dangerous. The spiritual activity of the Church had become so interwoven with its political ambitions that it was almost impossible to combat the latter without attacking the former. Already, in the twelfth century, Arnold of Brescia had encouraged the Romans to expel the Pope and Cardinals and had tried to reconstitute the Roman Republic on classical models. He maintained that holy orders were not indelible, that the clergy should not have temporal possessions, that the Donation of Constantine was not binding. But he had been born among Paterines and had studied under Abelard, and his doctrines on the sacraments shocked an age that was still Catholic and Christian, while his Republicanism offended the Emperor. St Bernard, the opponent of Arnold and Abelard, is far more characteristic of the age; while attacking with vigour the corruption of the Church, he always

remains a firm supporter of its doctrines. Both Papalists and Imperialists collaborated to raise the splendid edifice of scholastic theology. Public opinion was not yet ready to support those who rejected Christianity itself or even some of its tenets, and Dante, most violent of partisans, impartially consigns to fiery tombs a friend, an Emperor, and a hero.

The fall of Boniface VIII, the consequent decadence of Papal authority, and the conflict between the impotent Emperor Lewis the Bavarian and the almost equally impotent John XXII, gave new impetus to the numerous scholars and jurists who were hostile to sacerdotalism. The Emperor was too weak to profit by it, but the famous work of Marsilius of Padua, the *Defensor Pacis*,[1] struck at the very roots of the ecclesiastical system such as it had developed since the days of Constantine. The doctrines of the Paduan jurist were indeed revolutionary and profoundly influenced all subsequent controversy. He asserted, *inter alia*, that General Councils have a greater authority than the Pope, that the clerical order should not possess property or immunities, that it should be subject to civil law and to the ordinary criminal courts, that God alone can remit sins, that the distinction between priests and bishops was unscriptural, and that St Peter was never in Rome. These last two statements are characteristic of the time; they are both, as we have seen, historically false, but they are the result of a new historical criticism. The Church had made use of forgeries in order to fight the Empire, the

[1] See the new (1929) edition by C. W. Previté-Orton.

Renaissance scholars used bad history in order to fight the Church.

The Donation of Constantine was still generally accepted as an historical document,[1] but its importance as a controversial weapon had greatly decreased. The most eminent jurists declared that it was certainly void and *ultra vires*, inasmuch as the Emperor had no power to alienate any portion of the trust which he had received from God, while at the same time the Pope, as an ecclesiastic, had no right to receive or accept a temporal domain. Marsilius was supported by another eminent jurist, John of Jandun, of the University of Paris, and their attack on the Papacy was naturally a legal and an historical one. William of Ockham, the great English Franciscan, extended the warfare to philosophy and scholasticism. Member of an order which at that moment was engaged on a furious private controversy with the Pope, and which was the natural rival of the Dominicans, he not only attacked the theological position of the Pope with all the weapons of scholastic philosophy, but began the destruction of the whole intellectual system of the Middle Ages.

As early as the eleventh century Abelard, in his famous work *Sic et Non*, a collection of contradictory passages from the Fathers of the Church, had unconsciously laid the foundations for a sceptical rationalism. He performed a great service to Western

[1] Its falsity was first proved by the famous humanist, Laurentius Valla, in 1440. Curiously enough, he is buried in the Lateran. The document itself was probably composed as part of a life of St Sylvester and written in Greek; see A. Gaudenzi in *Bull. Istituto Storico Italiano*, 39 (1919), pp. 9 ff.

theology by emancipating it from that blind devotion to authority and to the words of the Fathers, which stifled all intellectual progress in the East, and he fortunately came too early for his teaching to be pushed to its logical conclusions. The great controversy between Realists and Nominalists occupied all the attention of the schoolmen, and it was further embittered by the foundation of the two rival monastic orders, who flung themselves into the fray with all the ardour of professional polemists. The study of Aristotle, which had been tentatively introduced by Abelard, gave new impetus to the discussions and new exercise to the minds. Ockham, with subtle scholastic logic, examined and rejected the temporal jurisdiction of the Papacy, and by his triumphant demonstration of Nominalism brought scholastic philosophy to a sudden and abrupt end. It was no longer possible to discuss a problem which no longer existed. The human mind was thus left free for new influences, and in the next century the study of Plato threw contempt upon the schoolmen as Aristotelians, while that of Cicero caused them to be regarded as Goths and barbarians. The fall of scholasticism was in many ways the fall of that form of ecclesiastical authority with which it was so closely united, and the insidious contagion of Platonism, with its implicit Pantheism, furthered the contemptuous indifference of the humanists for dogmatic theology as a last survival of ' gothic manners.'

The ideas of Marsilius and Ockham soon bore new fruit. England had been greatly vexed by the exactions of the Papal Curia, and had never for-

gotten the humiliation of King John and the rule of Pandulph. An apparently endless war had been begun with France, and it was natural that the English should view with suspicious hostility the close relations between the Papacy and the French court, and consequently the authority of 'a French Pope.' John Wyclif completed the work of Ockham, but with the democratic temper of a secular cleric and without the profound learning of the friar. He at first limited himself to the questions of the relations between Church and State: together with Ockham, he may be considered the founder of the characteristically English doctrine of the supremacy of the civil government over the Church. The first appearance of the Doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings—for such was the natural outcome of Wyclif's teaching—is a landmark in the history of the world. It had been generally held by the Imperialists that the Emperor was the Vicar of Christ in temporal matters, that his person was sacrosanct, and that he possessed an ultimate jurisdiction over the Church itself. These doctrines were now applied to all civil governments at a moment when the aristocratic oligarchies of the Middle Ages, which had been quite willing to admit in theory and disregard in practice the authority of the Empire, were giving way to great centralized and nationalist autocracies. One more step and we come to the pernicious doctrine of passive obedience.

Wyclif in all this had not gone very much farther than Ockham himself, and had received the general support of the English government and of the laity. He now pushed the arguments of the opponents

of the Papacy to their logical and inevitable conclusion, the denial of transubstantiation. He was probably influenced to adopt this course by the outbreak of the great schism. The 'Reformation' of the Church seemed to be impossible, and he was therefore led to attack the very existence of a sacerdotal caste. It was indeed obvious that in order to overthrow the power of sacerdotalism it was first necessary to overthrow the fundamental doctrine on which that power was based. His ideas were instantly rejected by his former associates and by nearly all English men of learning, and he then adopted the dangerous precedent of appealing to the mass of the people at large. Up till then dogmatic questions had been debated between scholars and men of learning in the precise and exact medium of the Latin tongue. The disputes were often inept and frequently acrimonious, but the disputants used the same language, in which the meaning of every word had been carefully defined, and they usually knew what they were talking about. Wyclif, by inviting a popular judgement on abstruse philosophical questions, which can only be understood, not to say debated, after a long and careful mental preparation, did incalculable harm to the cause of clear thinking, harm which still survives at the present day. To Wyclif's teaching is due the pernicious and entirely false idea, still so prevalent in Protestant countries, that any man with a Bible is capable of deciding such matters as the nature of the Sacraments, the operation of grace, the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, the details of ecclesiastical government. It has long been fashionable

to sneer at the schoolmen, yet if we compare their disputes with the recent controversy about the English Prayer-book, the great superiority of the scholastics is evident both in learning and in logic.

The authority of the Papacy was seldom lower than during the fourteenth century, especially when the disgraceful exile at Avignon was succeeded by a still more disgraceful schism. It might have been expected that the attacks of the jurists and reformers would have destroyed the Church itself, which, however, was saved through the spiritual and still more the political circumstances of the time. Though a strongly nationalist middle-class was all over Europe gradually taking the place of the old feudal nobility, the monarchs and their advisers remained almost untouched by the new ideas. They continued to pursue imperialist rather than nationalist policies. The French crown was as anxious to extend its influence in Italy as to consolidate its position in France; the King of Hungary coveted the heritage of the Italian Angevins; the various perplexing rulers of Eastern and Central Europe showed a convenient disregard for the claims of ethnography; Arragon held Sicily; everyone was intriguing to obtain some quite useless possessions in the Levant. The hundred years war between France and England was a contest of Kings, not of peoples. It was therefore not in the interests of the various rulers to encourage national sentiment or to support a decisive attack on the last international institution in Europe. The doctrines of Wyclif were taken up in Bohemia alone, where Huss came forward as the champion of the Slavs against the Germans far more

than as an actual theologian. It was natural that the Council of Constance should condemn him, for it feared that, if Bohemia and Moravia were to break from Rome, they would also break away from the influence and trade of Europe. The Emperor Sigismund, as a German King of Bohemia, had naturally a very personal interest in the matter.

The hostility of the European monarchs to the more intransigent reforming party was further increased by the economic and social unrest of their own countries, due partly to the terrible Black Death, partly to constant warfare, and partly to the changing economic conditions. The Jacquerie in France and the Peasant Rebellion in England rendered the governments more than usually suspicious of anything which might shake the basis of authority. In England the movement may have had some connexion with Wyclif, whose famous assertion that ' dominion is founded in grace ' could easily, though erroneously, be understood in a very revolutionary sense. Even in the fourteenth century the sacred rights of property were considered to be far more intangible than the doctrines of the Church. The monarchs had not yet realized that heresy and religion might yet become the strongest supports of arbitrary power.

The scholars who had initiated the attack were not the right men to push it home. They were a close corporation, international in language and in sentiment, citizens of the Republic of letters in its widest sense, completely ignorant of popular feeling, and with all the contempt of learned men for the vulgar. Wyclif and Huss alone attempted to

appeal to the people in the vulgar tongue, and the lack of printing, coupled with the ignorance of the peasants, determined the failure of their efforts. The scholars were, as almost invariably, profoundly conservative even when they were most revolutionary; they thought that it was possible to go forward by going backward. Marsilius, Ockham, and Jandun, an Italian, an Englishman, and a Frenchman, were seeking to cure the evils of their day by a return to the times of the Saxon and Franconian Emperors, by a revival of an Empire that was as dead as those Emperors themselves. Yet that curious idea has survived to the present day, and we still talk about the Revolution of the sixteenth century as the 'Reformation.' The artificers of that movement honestly believed that they were returning to the simplicity of the early Church!

The scholars and humanists were real reformers, not revolutionaries. They wished to limit the power of the Church, and, above all, the autocracy of the Pope, but did not want any profound change in the sacerdotal system itself and still less any change of doctrine. They triumphed with their natural head, John Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, when the Emperor Sigismund convoked, in 1414, the famous Council of Constance.[1] Matters had reached a state when it was necessary to do something in order to preserve the Church. Three Popes were simultaneously casting discredit on their office, and the international sentiment of scholars and

[1] The Imperial letters convoking the council are of the 30th October, 1413. On the 10th December Pope John XXIII, who had hoped that an Italian city might be chosen as its seat, published the Bull, *Ad pacem et exaltationem Ecclesiae.*

jurists was still sufficient to enable them to support the last gathering of Latin Christendom, under the aegis of Caesar.

The Council was completely successful. The three Popes were deposed and an able and learned man was elected. Huss was burnt. The scholars could now return to the serious business of collecting ancient manuscripts and to the fascinating study of Greek literature. There were, of course, some misguided enthusiasts who wanted the Council to deal with the details of the reformation of the Church, to do the work that was later done at Trent. But no one wanted to start on such difficult and controversial subjects when far more interesting studies, such as the recently discovered poem of Lucretius, were available. Three Popes had certainly been too many; they interfered with the peaceful business of study. The Council had shown the Popes that there was an authority superior to their own. That gesture ought to have been sufficient and it was better to leave the other questions to the gentle hand of time.

Time, however, was a disappointing doctor. There was a slight improvement in discipline, and the Popes of the fifteenth century were men of vast learning and exquisite taste. The humanists, though they continued to scoff at the Church and the clergy, found the Popes and Cardinals munificent and indulgent patrons. But ecclesiastical abuses continued unchecked, indeed they increased, for money was now needed to buy codices and pictures, as well as estates and armies. The humanists remained characteristically insensible to the growing unrest of

the people, and indeed, by their openly expressed contempt for the Church, helped to prepare the revolution which was to overwhelm their whole civilization. Thus the encyclopaedists in France, the intelligentsia in Russia, prepared the very movement that was to destroy them.

They were scholars and gentlemen; they were not enthusiasts. They might, like More, be ready to die for their opinions, but they were not ready to fight for them. They were not pagans—a great deal of nonsense is talked about the ' Pagan ' Renaissance —but their minds were obsessed by a love for the beautiful and by the cult of antiquity. Such an international freemasonry was naturally out of touch with the mind of the people, who, thanks to the invention of printing, was just becoming sufficiently educated to half understand the grosser parts of the new teaching. The humanists were strong enough to awake the popular unrest, they were quite unable to guide it. The effect of a visit to Rome on Erasmus and on Luther respectively shows the difference between the polite scholar and the rude demagogue. Erasmus may have laid the egg: he disclaimed with horror the basilisk that was hatched by Luther and the Anabaptists.

CHAPTER XII

THE PAPAL MONARCHY

Sono questi dominii così acquistati, o consueti a vivere sotto un Principe, o usi ad essere liberi; e acquistansi o con l'armi d'altri, o con proprie; o per fortuna o per virtù.

Machiavelli, 'Il Principe' cap. I.

THE outrage of Anagni had taken place because the medieval Papacy had neglected all those elementary precautions by which states, and even individuals, attempt to secure themselves from foreign injury. The Popes had been so busy trying to extend their authority over the whole of Christendom that they had not troubled to consolidate their temporal position. Rome itself, always divided into turbulent factions, was the most dangerous of their residences, while the attempt of each new Pope to secure faithful supporters by increasing the power of his own family naturally provoked the opposition of all other Roman nobles.

The temporal dominions of the Papacy had gradually grown up out of the donations of Pepin and the Carolingian sovereigns, and in 1201 had been accurately defined by the Treaty of Neuss between Innocent III and Otto IV. The Papal supremacy was recognized over most of those territories that were later known as the Papal States, such as they survived till 1860. But the Papal authority was for a long time a theoretical juris-

diction, not a real and effective sovereignty. The cities of the Romagna admitted that in theory the Pope was their legal suzerain, but in practice they were almost entirely independent. They were much in the same position as the Lombard cities, which never thought of denying the Imperial rights, but never hesitated to oppose the slightest attempt to exercise those rights. After a long and obstinate contest, in which the Empire put forth all its power, the cities triumphed. The Papacy, which had no stable military force of any kind, was absolutely powerless to govern the territories to which it was legally entitled. In Rome itself it usually existed only on sufferance and, should a particularly violent outbreak of the chronic unrest drive it from the City of the Apostles, it was able to return only by appealing to the Emperor, to the Normans, or to an opposite faction of the Roman Baronage.

This situation may help to explain Paschal II's extraordinary plan for resolving the controversy over the investitures. He suggested that the Church should abandon to the Emperor all its feudal rights and temporal dominions, while the Emperor should waive his claim to the right of investiture and of interference in ecclesiastical matters. To modern historians, unfortunately familiar with the ' Roman Question,' this offer to surrender the ' Temporal Power ' has always seemed one of the strangest ideas of the time, but, if we look at it from the point of view of a medieval Pope, the renunciation was not a very great one. The whole difficulty of his position was that he did not possess any real temporal power. Paschal himself had spent ten years in an

absolutely vain attempt to restore a little order to the Roman Campagna, the immediate environs of the Papal capital, and he may well have felt that the dominions of the Roman See gave far more trouble than they were worth. The surrender of theoretical rights, which had never been, and apparently never could be, rendered really effective, was more than justified by an Imperial surrender of the right of investiture, a right which was regularly exercised. In 1111 the Papal rights over the Romagna or the Marche were hardly more effective, and scarcely more useful, than in more recent times the claims of Stuart and Hanoverian Kings to the Crown of France.

Paschal, in formulating his plan, seems to have forgotten that other bishops were in a much more fortunate position than the Bishop of Rome. The German prelates, in particular, were able to exercise an unlimited authority over the fiefs which they had received from the Carolingians. The three Rhenish Archbishops were the greatest princes in the Empire. Their territorial possessions were not as great as those to which the Pope laid claim, but what they held in theory they ruled in practice. Their natural and immediate opposition was fatal to Paschal's interesting scheme which, indeed, could never have been carried out, since it presupposed the good faith and honesty of both Church and Empire.

The situation remained more or less stationary during the two following centuries. Some Popes, of course, were able to exercise greater temporal authority than others, but the constant growth of

communal feeling in all the Italian cities diminished the Papal power even over Rome itself, while Bologna was as independent a city as Milan, and proudly inscribed on its shield the word Libertas. Its independence from Rome was further emphasized by its deposition of St Peter, its original patron Saint, and its exaltation of San Petronio.

It is not surprising that, after the fall of Boniface VIII and the consequent realization of their temporal impotence, the Popes should have given up an apparently hopeless struggle. The celebrated Papal exile in France was not directly an act of homage to the victorious Philip, much less a 'Babylonish captivity.' It was a legitimate and thoroughly comprehensible, although disastrous, attempt to find a less dangerous and turbulent residence than Rome, which was abandoned in despair to independence and anarchy. Strictly speaking, the Popes did not go to France, which at that time was not the compact territorial entity with which we are now so familiar. The valley of the Rhone was theoretically part of the Burgundies, the ancient *Regnum Arelatense*, and as such was juridically a portion of the Empire, although its gradual absorption by France had already begun. The Popes had for some time been Lords of the Venaissin, their share of the loot of the Albigensian Crusade; Lyons had been a frequent meeting place for General Councils, and Avignon itself belonged to the Angevin King of Naples, who was the Pope's vassal for the kingdom and was his Vicar in Italy. The Popes were thus in theory and even in appearance autonomous sovereigns who chose, for

perfectly good reasons, to live in a somewhat distant portion of their scattered possessions.

But in reality their position was very different. They were Frenchmen, and, though the Frenchmen of the fourteenth century may have lacked that extravagant nationalism which has now become characteristic of their race, they were naturally inclined to support the policy of the French Monarchy, which under Philip IV had become the most powerful State in Europe. Even had the Popes remained in Italy, they could hardly have escaped the influence of Philip. He had emerged triumphant from his sharp contest with the Pope, his kinsman was King of Naples and the chief power in the Italian peninsula. Already during his struggle with Boniface, one of the King's chief supporters, the lawyer, Peter Du Bois, had made the extraordinary suggestion that the Pope should transfer to the King of France all his temporal rights and possessions, and live in France as a pensioner of the French King. And in the eyes of Europe it almost seemed as though this scheme had been carried out; the Popes were Frenchmen living, if not actually in the territories, most certainly under the protection of the French crown, while the Papal Vicar in Italy was the French King of Naples, who was trying to extend his rule over the whole peninsula.

For all these reasons the political importance of the Papacy had greatly diminished in the eyes of Europe. It is curious to note how the French, despite their great qualities, indeed perhaps on account of these qualities, have always been able to awake the intense hostility of other countries.

But far more important than the loss of political power was the loss of spiritual prestige. The French Popes, taken as a whole, were not the inferiors of their predecessors in intelligence or even in morals. But they were French: but they were living far from Rome. Never has the spiritual importance of the Eternal City been more clearly emphasized. It is true that, without the Pope, Rome was nothing more than a turbulent, insanitary, and ruinous village, yet, without Rome, the Pope was just a man—and a Frenchman at that. This was especially felt to be the case at a time when the revival of learning and the consequent adoration of classical antiquity was well on its way, but had not yet extinguished the mystical enthusiasm of the Middle Ages. Rienzi and Petrarch, the unbalanced demagogue and the poetic scholar, show how greatly the idea of Rome was still alive.

The first extraordinary successes of Cola di Rienzo made even the French Popes realize that something had to be done to settle the affairs of Italy, which were indeed in a terrible state. The controversy between the Papacy and Lewis the Bavarian had emphasized still further the impotence of the Empire. The new Emperor, Charles IV, issued the ' Golden Bull ' which ' legalized anarchy and called it a constitution.' From that time, except for Sigismund's action at the Council of Constance, the Roman Empire, as distinguished from the hereditary possessions of the House of Habsburg, which gradually obtained a prescriptive right to the Imperial crown, ceases to have any considerable influence on European affairs. France, the chief

support of the Papacy, had, on the other hand, been laid in the dust at the battle of Crécy and for over a century was engaged in a struggle for its existence. In Italy the period of communal liberties had been followed in almost every city by a *Signoria*, the ' tyranny ' of one family. A most eminent living Italian recently declared that ' the people are tired of freedom ': many Italians in the fourteenth century were certainly tired of freedom, such as it was then. Freedom begat anarchy, and anarchy begat the Tyrant: *ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον.*

The time for restoring the Papal authority was thus well chosen, even from a military point of view. The armies of the Middle Ages had been feudal or national; the citizen levies of rich burghers had met, and had often defeated, the armies composed of barons and their retainers. With the growth of politer manners war tended to become more and more a highly specialized profession, and the Hundred Years' War let loose a savage host of mercenaries, ready to sell their swords to the highest bidder. Edward III himself had initiated the traditional English system of becoming a kind of paymaster of the poorer German princelings. The revenues of the Papacy were at that time probably greater than those of any European kingdom, and the Popes were thus able, for the first time in their history, to command the service of military forces of their own.

Above all, Innocent VI, the new Pope, was able to find the right man. The Cardinal Gil d'Albornoz had been a soldier and had covered himself with glory during the wars of Alfonso XI of Castille

against the Moors, being knighted before the walls of Algeciras. He had later entered the Church, and had become Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain when he was forced to fly to Avignon on the accession of Peter the Cruel. Albornoz had to an eminent degree the qualities of a soldier and a statesman, and on 30 June 1353 he was named Papal Legate and Vicar-General for Italy, and set off at once, taking with him the discredited but still useful Cola.

Albornoz is the real founder of the Temporal Power. At the time of his nomination Montefiascone was the only city in all the vast extent of Papal territory that still recognized the Papal sovereignty; when he died in 1367 he had rendered the Italian dominions of the Papacy safer than Avignon itself, so much so that Innocent's successor, Urban V, was at last induced to visit Rome. The effect of his rule is best summarized in the story that when the Pope asked him to account for his stewardship the Cardinal sent him a cart filled with the keys of the cities that he had subdued.

His glory is all the greater in that he was able to accomplish his task with comparatively little bloodshed. He was, no doubt, greatly assisted by the good fortune which his genius certainly deserved. The diplomatic ability by which he secured the support of the various Italian states, especially against the threatening power of the Visconti, was only equalled by the statesmanship displayed in administering the recuperated territories. He showed the cities that the rule of the Pope was lighter than that of their native tyrants, while many of the petty

lords were allowed to retain their possessions as Papal vicars. The *Constitutiones Aegidianae*, which he promulgated and which were later revised by Sixtus IV, remained till the last century the charter defining the relations between the Pope and his subjects in the Romagna and the Marches.

Yet on the death of Urban V, in 1370, a general insurrection seemed likely to undo the work of the great Cardinal. The new Pope, Gregory XI, realized that if he wished to retain his Italian territories—and Albornoz had shown that such a task, far from being impossible, was less difficult than it appeared—it was necessary for the Papacy to return to Rome and emancipate itself from the influence of France. The great schism which broke out on Gregory's death in Rome did not greatly harm the position of the Popes as temporal sovereigns in Italy, although it almost destroyed their spiritual authority in Christendom. The reason for this was that of the rival Popes one was an Italian and was, moreover, in actual possession. The Popes had also acquired a new and extraordinarily efficient weapon. They had always found Rome the most troublesome and dangerous of their possessions, but when Boniface VIII, in 1300, proclaimed the Jubilee from the Loggia of the Lateran he placed the Papal Sovereignty on that surest of foundations, the personal advantage of the Roman people. Originally the Jubilee had been declared for every hundred years, but the prosperity which the first one had brought to Rome had been so great that the interval was reduced to fifty, to thirty-three, to twenty-five years. Rome preferred wealth and servitude to

poverty and freedom: she was still the venal city, ready to sell herself if she could find a buyer.

After the Council of Constance had successfully put an end to the schism, the new Pope, Martin V, at once turned his attention to the recovery of his temporal possessions. This was all the more necessary in that the Council wanted to proceed to the reformation of the Church, and had declared that its authority was greater than that of the Pope. Both these ideas were most objectionable to the Papacy, which saw, however, that it might recover its former autocratic independence by creating a strong temporal monarchy of its own, and thus be able to encounter force with force. The Pope could not run the risk of a second Anagni. If the Emperor, or the King of France, or even the Council, were to attempt to override the Papal decisions, they should not be able to lay the Papacy in the dust with the help of a few outlaws and brigands; armies should be opposed to armies, and the spiritual thunders of the Roman Pontiff should be taken up and echoed by the more effective voice of his terrestrial canon.

The fifteenth century, the century of the Renaissance, was also the period which prepared, and partly saw, the triumph of absolutism. The great feudal nobility had been gradually destroyed by a variety of causes, by the Crusades, by unending wars, by their own internal jealousies, by a natural, physical decadence. Many of its leaders had perished in battle, many at the hands of assassins, many on the scaffold. Their military glory, their chief justification, had passed away with the change in the art of war, after the discovery that the shock of their

mailed cavalry could be received on an impenetrable forest of pikes or broken by a flight of arrows. Crécy and Poitiers, Morgarten and Sempach, Grandson and Morat, Towton and Tewkesbury mark the end of the feudal period of history. A number of puny, unscrupulous, and incredibly able men, by using their brains, by breaking their faith, and by the support of a mercenary infantry, founded their dominion on the ruins of the feudal aristocracy.

Martin V unfortunately was himself a Roman noble, and attempted to restore the Papal power by increasing that of his own family, the Colonna. Subsequent Pontiffs corrected his policy, and after long, desperate and bloody struggles, the Roman aristocracy was reduced to dignified insignificance. Eugenius IV's capable but ferocious general, the Cardinal Vitelleschi, crushed the Colonna and destroyed their stronghold, Palestrina. By 1492, a date memorable for so many great events, the Papal territories on the south side of the Apennines were more or less quiet.

Even as the ecclesiastical State had been first united by a Spanish soldier, who had become a Cardinal, so the Papal monarchy was founded by a Spanish cardinal, who became a soldier and a statesman. Alexander VI and his son, Caesar Borgia, are among the greatest men of their time, and we can hardly doubt that at the back of their minds was the dream of a great Italian kingdom, of which the Pope should be the suzerain and Caesar and his descendants the effective rulers. The time was propitious. The invasion of Charles VIII had entirely

changed the political situation in the peninsula. The succession to the kingdom of Naples and to the Duchy of Milan, formerly the strongest Italian states, were both in dispute, and there was a good chance that the Pope might secure the prizes about which France, Spain and the Emperor were so acrimoniously fighting. The Tuscan republics were in complete decadence. The great baronial castles had fallen like cardboard before the French siege artillery.

Caesar was certainly capable of accomplishing such a design. His failure was due to an ill-luck so extraordinary that it almost appears to be the hand of God, and even so what he actually did achieve is amazing. In an incredibly short space of time, from the autumn of 1499 till the death of his father on 18 August 1503, Caesar had succeeded in destroying for ever the power of the Roman nobles and had crushed all the petty lords of Umbria and Romagna, having ruthlessly slain all those who stood against him, yet at the same time having captured the respect, if not the affection, of his new subjects. Had his father lived another year it is almost certain that he would have become master of Tuscany, and then the conquest of the Neapolitan kingdom, that ancient fief of the Popes, ought not to have been a task of great difficulty.

As Machiavelli rightly saw, Caesar was the only man capable of driving out the foreigners and of uniting Italy under one rule. Julius II, that implacable enemy of his house, continued his policy with equal vigour but with far less ability. He succeeded in breaking the power of Venice, the only

Italian state that might have opposed the Papal designs and might even have reduced the peninsula under its own dominion, but he was unable to carry out his plans, and he placed the country under the yoke of Spain. Caesar failed in his great and ambitious project, *magnis tamen excidit ausis*, and it almost seems as though he had been laid low, like Capaneus, by a direct intervention of God. He had foreseen everything, he had prepared for everything, but how could he have foreseen that, while the body of his father was lying untended, bloated and corrupt, he himself, in a neighbouring room of the Vatican, would be at death's door?

Though Caesar's policy might easily have been successful, it would certainly have been disastrous for the Church. The Universal Church could not have remained a great power, equal perhaps to France and Spain. The contemporary suggestion that Alexander intended transforming the Papacy into a hereditary monarchy is wildly fantastic, but, had Caesar become King of Italy, even if nominally a vassal of the Pope, he would soon have deprived the Popes of any independence and authority. The Papacy could not have survived a second Avignon; the Reformation would have killed instead of wounding it.

On the other hand, the Papacy was intrinsically incapable of becoming a great temporal power, despite the attempt of Julius II. His policy was entirely ruined by the two Medici Popes. Although the ruler of an already great monarchy, a Philip II or a Louis XIV, need not have any particular military talent, the man who seeks to make a small monarchy

great, or a weak one powerful, a Henri IV, a Frederic the Great, a Richelieu, must be a competent soldier. He must, moreover, be economical to the point of meanness. Almost every penny of the public revenue should be spent on the army. The Popes were men of peace, of polite ease, preferring the tortuous arts of diplomacy to the clash of arms. They were men past the prime of life, and the brevity of their reigns—an average of ten years—rendered a continuous policy almost impossible. They had no one whom they could really trust, for the Cardinals were their electors and their successors, their generals mercenaries who considered their own interests before those of their employers. There was no privy council, no body of old and faithful public servants who in hereditary monarchies guide the steps of a new sovereign. The Popes were absolute autocrats, without the slightest even unwritten check. They liked magnificence and the fine arts. As we wander through Rome we can indeed be thankful that the Popes spent their wealth on things far more precious and enduring than armies. In the century before the Council of Trent they were often obliged to secure their election by extensive bribery, and they were consequently forced to recoup themselves and ensure the prosperity of their own family by a ruinous squandering of what in other states would have been considered the public revenue.

Hereditary autocracy has many disadvantages; republics, in which the head of the executive is reduced to a mere figure-head, have many others; but an elective celibate autocracy is of all temporal

governments the worst. The attempt to transform the Papacy into an international super-state was shattered by the buffet at Anagni; the attempt to turn it into a national Italian monarchy was drowned in the blood of the sack of Rome.

CHAPTER XIII

THE REFORMATION

'Quasi vero non istud ipsum sit perire, aliud fieri.'
Erasmus, 'Encomium Moriae.'

At Worms, that ancient city where the ghost of grim Hagen of Tronje still seems to keep his faithful watch over the storied hoard, the German people have raised a national monument to Martin Luther. It is one of those characteristic expressions in bronze and marble of nineteenth century 'Deutschtum,' and it is perhaps less hideous and certainly far more interesting than most of its kind. Round the base of the great statue are the images of four picked precursors of the Reformation: Peter Valdus, Wyclif, Huss, and—Savonarola! The Dominican must be considerably surprised at finding himself in such company, at once too good and too bad. He was a politician, and an unscrupulous politician at that, an able demagogue, and, probably, an honest patriot, but he was never a theologian. He denounced the Papacy, yet his denunciations are not as violent and certainly less sincere and disinterested than those of St Bernard, St Catherine, Dante, Marsilius, Erasmus. His posthumous appearance at Worms is probably due to the fact that, by a quite fortuitous chain of circumstances, almost exclusively determined by political considerations, he was burnt,

nominally at the request of the ecclesiastical authority, a fate which he shares with St Joan. At a slightly greater distance from the central figure are four more statues of supporters of the Reformation, Melanchthon, Reuchlin, Philip of Hesse, and Frederic of Saxony.

Of these eight worthies, Reuchlin and Savonarola are not reformers at all—at least in the conventional sense of the word—while Philip and Frederic are princes whose conduct we shall presently examine. The remaining four, true Reformers, were superior to Luther in intellectual capacity, in clear and courageous thinking, and even perhaps in moral character. Luther was intellectually inferior to his more or less contemporary rivals, Zwingli, Calvin, Servetus, Ochino, Bruno, the two Socinii. It is therefore interesting to examine the reasons why Luther was successful where men like Wyclif and Huss had failed.

Of the external causes which contributed to his success, the invention of printing is certainly the most important. We have already seen how the ground had been prepared by the intellectual activity of the humanists, and learning is always dangerous to religion, for learning induces that spiritual pride which is one of the most deadly of deadly sins. Under the Roman Empire the intellectual activity of the whole Mediterranean world had spread much truth and much error. During the Renaissance the invention of printing allowed new ideas to spread even more rapidly and to reach a new class of persons. A voice raised in Basle or Zurich could be heard in Portugal or Poland, not by learned men

alone, but also by that class of half-educated burgesses which was gradually taking the place and wielding the power of the old feudal nobility. Thus the history of the Reformation is in many ways similar to that of early Christianity, and the infinite heresies which troubled the Church in the days of Constantine and Justinian were equalled in number by the infinite sects of the Reformers. Yet during the fourth and fifth centuries the heresies were stamped out, though not without considerable loss; during the Renaissance they succeeded in dividing Christendom apparently for ever.

Intellectual activity under the Roman Empire was part of a definite political system which was international and unitary. The idea of the Church, which was from the very beginning universal in character, developed with the idea of the Empire, both influencing each other reciprocally. Even as there could be only one Empire, so there could be only one Church, one standard of doctrine. Schism, like treason, was both a sin and a crime. Uniformity was felt to be as necessary in religious as in political matters. This conception of Catholicity is one of Rome's greatest legacies, and determined, far more than the Imperial edicts, the decline of the early heresies.

The whole constitution of the Roman Church had by the time of the Middle Ages come to presuppose a single universal authority in matters temporal. Even as all men, even the heathen, were the spiritual subjects of God and consequently of His Vicar, so they should be the temporal subjects of one single authority; for both powers, the spiritual

and the temporal, though distinct, derive directly from God. It must, however, be remembered that both these authorities are necessarily mediate; they imply a moral jurisdiction, not an executive dominion. Thus the Pope does not govern the Church of which he is the head: the Church is governed by the bishops, who rule by right divine. Thus the supreme temporal authority does not imply any immediate territorial sovereignty.

Perhaps the nearest approach to this ideal is furnished by the League of Nations, if it were to become what it was meant to be, a supreme moral authority over all men without distinction. It would have to become Christian and orthodox, for it must necessarily revere Him from whom it receives its power. It would thus take the place of that Roman Empire which has always implied far more than the actual dominions governed by Rome. Considered from this point of view, the suggestion that the Pope should become a member of the League becomes obviously absurd. The two powers, though parallel and complementary, must always remain separate. The Pope could be a member only in virtue of his temporal sovereignty, which he has not always possessed and which is not dogmatically essential. The spiritual electors and the prince-bishops of the Empire took their seats in the Diet as temporal Princes, not as successors of the Apostles.

This ideal of political as well as religious catholicity was the chief factor that occasioned the restoration of the Empire under the Carolingians and kept the Empire itself alive, at least as a political conception, till the fifteenth century. Had it been the

result of the political circumstances in which it had developed it would have changed even as the Empire of Augustus changed, but it was founded on moral and religious ideas which had been taught by the Church in another sphere. It was differently expressed at different times, especially when it had to be adapted to the feudal system with its conception of ordered hierarchy, but it still forms an essential part of Christian civilization. The Church has always insisted on absolute religious universality, and the eclipse of political universality was the chief cause of the success of the Reformation.

It is a great mistake to consider the Reformation as a consequence of the corruption and abuses in the Church. The Church had been corrupt before and has been corrupt since; in every age there have been rigorists who, with more or less reason, have denounced the corruption of the Church and the clergy. The Clementine Epistle and the Apocalypse prove that it had already begun in the first century, and simony is, as its name implies, as old as the Apostles. The conditions of the Church were certainly worse in the tenth than in the fifteenth century, when the Popes were at least scholars and gentlemen. The situation at that time was, however, sufficiently scandalous, and everyone agreed that a thorough reformation was necessary. What took place, however, was not a reformation but a revolution. The real reformation came later, and was what we are obliged to call the Counter-Reformation. This confusion of terms is most unfortunate, for ardent Catholics who desired a reformation have thus been classed with the real Reformers and, as

at Worms, have been placed in company which they would have abhorred. Savonarola would have been the first to stoke the fire for Huss.

By the fifteenth century the political unity of Europe had been shattered beyond repair. This process of disruption had begun as early as the sixth century with the loss of Egypt, a country which, even under the Caesars, had retained much of its peculiar national character. Then came the separation of the West from the East, a separation that was rendered even more apparent and definite by the insincere attempts at reunion which the East made, and still continues to make, in the hopes of some temporal advantage. France, England, Spain gradually refused to recognize the Imperial authority; the Swiss cantons were practically independent; Bohemia was rebellious. The Popes had indeed slain the dragon that had threatened them, but from the dragon's teeth a host of new and far more dangerous enemies had sprung up.

The position of France in the Catholic world—and I use the adjective as much in a political as in a religious sense—had always been ambiguous. As long as it had remained weak it had been a useful counterpoise to the power of the Empire, but now it was strong and could exhibit to the full its ardent nationalism. It had overthrown the medieval Papacy, and the French Church had proved itself to be as nationalist as its sovereign. In England the Tudors had at last succeeded in rendering the royal power supreme. Spain had been united in one compact monarchy, and had become the richest and most powerful state in Europe through the discovery

of the New World, and by its union with the Habsburg and Burgundian dominions. Its power broke the bounds thought to have been placed by God to human activity, and its young king's proud motto revealed his intention to go ' still farther.'

The Church, in its former struggles against the exactions of the crown, had nearly always been supported by the feudal nobility and usually by the peasantry. The situation had now entirely changed. In the great absolutist monarchies the power of the nobility had been crushed, that of the burgesses and the people had not yet arisen. In the Empire, on the other hand, the nobility had succeeded in destroying the power of the crown and was anxious to retain the freedom or licence which it had thus usurped. Formerly the clerical and the lay feudatories had united against the Emperor; now that they had been victorious the natural jealousies began once more to show themselves. They were all in a difficult position, for the decline of the executive power exposed Central Europe to the grave danger of a Turkish invasion. The German princes, unwilling to make any personal sacrifices, at last decided to offer the Imperial dignity to a prince sufficiently powerful to protect it, and Charles, King of Spain, Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Lord of the Americas, ascended, fifth of his name, the throne of Charlemagne and Caesar.

No Emperor since the days of the Hohenstaufen had wielded so vast a power, and the German princes, whose selfish policy had rendered his election necessary, began selfishly to tremble for their own independence and security. The transformation of

the Papacy into an important monarchy, although such a transformation was, as we have seen, inevitable, was necessarily accomplished at the expense of its spiritual authority. Foreign princes and peoples were now inclined to consider the Pope less as the universal pastor and guide of Christendom, and more as a merely temporal prince of second rank who tried to obtain an unfair advantage over his rivals by means of antiquated spiritual claims. During the Middle Ages the nationality of the Pope had always been a matter of complete indifference: with the growth of nationalism the Vatican was at once suspected as an Italian institution. Already, during the schism, the allegiance of the various countries of Europe to the rival Popes had been determined by racial and political considerations, and the former hostility to the ' French Pope ' was now transferred to the ' Italian Pope.' While the population of Europe in general had no quarrel with the doctrine or the liturgy of Rome, there was a strong feeling against the sacerdotal caste and against the centralized system of ecclesiastical government. Shakespeare who, in matters of doctrine, might be considered a devout catholic, certainly expressed the sentiments of his countrymen in *King John* and *Henry the Eighth*. The great wealth of the Church, a wealth which was as often employed for noble as for ignoble ends, was enviously hated by the populace and jealously coveted by the princes and governments. In Germany the wealth and corruption of the clergy was at its worst, and in almost all other countries there was a constantly growing opposition to the financial exactions of the

Roman Curia and to the consequent exportation of local capital to Italy.

The course and partial triumph of the Reformation is not one of those periods of history of which humanity has any right to be proud. The selfishness and greed of all parties excite a disgust which is all too seldom tempered by the conduct of honourable gentlemen, such as More, of honest, if perhaps misguided, enthusiasts, such as Latimer, of reasonable and conciliating scholars, such as Melanchthon, and of clear and courageous thinkers, such as Zwingli. But it is as difficult to admire the majority of the Reformers as it is to admire the majority of the contemporary cardinals and prince-bishops, and while we stigmatize the corruption and abuses of the Church and of the Curia, we cannot approve that system of political jobbery and of organized theft by which absolutism sought to render itself still more absolute.

Nowhere did the Reformation assume a worse aspect than in England. Macaulay cannot be suspected of leanings towards Rome, yet the words with which he sums up the origins of the English Reformation, though of great severity, are just. ' A King whose character may be best described by saying that he was despotism itself personified, unprincipled ministers, a rapacious aristocracy, a servile Parliament, such were the instruments by which England was delivered from the yoke of Rome. The work which had been begun by Henry, the murderer of his wives, was continued by Somerset, the murderer of his brother, and completed by Elizabeth, the murderer of her guest.' Even Green,

in many ways more biased than Macaulay, tells the disgraceful story with sufficient candour, although it is difficult to understand why he should explicitly describe the victims of Mary, including Cranmer, as martyrs, and yet implicitly withhold that title from the far more numerous and, if we consider More and the Carthusians alone, far more respectable victims of Henry, Edward, and Elizabeth.

In Germany the situation was far more complicated, for there the Reformation was supported by all those who opposed the federalization of the Empire and the Imperial attempts to recover some measure of the power which had been lost through centuries of anarchy and usurpation. Yet at the same time it was not to be a popular movement; the whole object was to remove the last checks on the despotism of local princes. At that very Diet of Worms in 1521, in which Luther made his famous Declaration, a vain attempt was being made to form a central council of government for the whole Empire. It was natural that such an attempt should be secretly and openly opposed by many of the greatest princes, such as the Electors of Saxony and of Brandenburg, and by a considerable number of the princes of second rank, such as the Landgraves of Hesse.

The turning point of Luther's career, and consequently of the German Reformation, is the great Peasant War of 1525. It was inevitable that as in England Wyclif's teaching had indirectly caused Wat Tyler's rebellion, so the progress of the Reformation, with its implicit rebellion against the principle of authority, would encourage democratic

and revolutionary doctrines among the peasantry. And the lot of the German peasants was indeed a hard one, and goes far to excuse the savage violence of their subsequent behaviour. For nearly a century there had been considerable unrest in South and West Germany, and the success of the Swiss cantons, in their struggle for freedom, had encouraged numerous sporadic revolts which had been put down with more or less ease. At the beginning of 1525 the capture and plunder of the Abbey of Kempten was the signal for a general insurrection all over Germany. In Upper Swabia the insurgents demanded the free election of their parish clergy, the abolition of tithes and serfdom, the restoration of common lands and forests which had been usurped by the feudal lords, release from all vexatory feudal rights and impositions, and an equal administration of justice. If we consider the conditions of the German peasantry at the time we must stand astonished at the moderation of their demands. In France nearly three centuries later the Estates General, with far less provocation, advanced far more radical proposals. The excesses committed in the course of the insurrection are explained and partly excused as the inevitable result of a long period of oppression, coupled with the excitement aroused by religious fanaticism.

At this crisis in their affairs the German princes surpassed even their habitual selfishness and opportunism. The immediate result of Wat Tyler's rebellion had been the vigorous persecution of the Lollards, and the Reformers might now have suffered the same fate had not the princes already found out

that Luther might be successfully used in opposing the schemes of the Emperor. At first the nobles assisted with great complacency at the spread of the insurrection, for its fury was at the outset directed chiefly against the ecclesiastical properties, which were far easier to attack. The lay nobility was delighted at the downfall of its ancient rival. The Emperor's brother, the Archduke Ferdinand, raised an army, but his brutal general, Von Waldburg, was defeated; and again the princes smiled at this reverse of the Habsburgs. But the peasants were perversely blind to the important questions of the balance of power within the Empire. They were not content with freeing themselves from the authority of the bigoted and superstitious Romish clergy, but actually raised their sacrilegious hands against the no milder authority of those great and enlightened princes who were sheltering Luther.

Had the Reformer now stood out as the champion of all oppression, had he taken his stand by the side of Götz von Berlichingen and raised the standard of human freedom, one might now extend even to him that respectful admiration with which one regards Zwingli as he awaits death in the front rank of the Zurich battle array. But Luther hedged; and finally, while indulging in vain and hypocritical platitudes about justice, oppression, and violence, threw in his lot with the princes and placed the moral force of the Reformation at the service of despotism.

Whatever different opinions might be held as to the sacraments, justification, church government, or the Germanic constitution, all the German princes

were in complete agreement as to the sacrosanct and intangible dogma of the rights of property. The leaders of the Protestant cause, those protectors of Luther and opponents of the House of Austria, the 'Magnanimous' Philip of Hesse and the Saxon Dukes united with the Imperial forces, with the Rhenish archbishops and other Catholic and ecclesiastical princes to overwhelm the Peasant Insurrection in a deluge of blood. The union of protestantism and autocracy was celebrated by the massacre of 150,000 peasants, and ten years later the Protestant powers completed their work by exterminating the Anabaptists and restoring Münster to its prince-bishop. It was possible to serve both God and Mammon.

Bryce was 'tempted to speculate as to what would have happened had Charles espoused the reforming cause.' The answer is easy. The princes and cities would have gathered at Schmalkalden to defend the liberties and the religion of their fathers, and Maurice of Saxony, unfurling a Papal banner, would have driven the apostate Emperor from Innsbruck and protected the deliberations of the Tridentine fathers.

CHAPTER XIV

REFORM, STAGNATION, REVOLUTION

ῥᾴδιον μὲν γὰρ πόλιν σεῖσαι καὶ ἀφαυροτέροις.
ἀλλ'ἐπὶ χώρας αὖτις ἔσσαι δυσπαλὲς δὴ γίγνεται, ἐξαπίνας
εἰ μὴ θεὸς ἀγεμόνεσσι κυβερνατὴρ γένηται.
Pindar O.P. iv. 272.

IT is a common mistake to suppose that the Reformation might have been avoided had the Church been able or willing to reform itself during the fifteenth century. It was only as a consequence of Luther's revolution that the authority of Rome could be strengthened and purified. It is impossible to forestall a revolution by means of concessions at a time when revolutionary ideas are already general. Such action is immediately taken as a sign of weakness. The spiritual travail which was to give birth to the Reformation was already far advanced, for, as we have seen, it was the result of the downfall of the medieval Empire and the medieval Church before the conquering progress of the new nationalism. Had the Councils of Constance, Basle, or Pisa attempted a definite reformation of the doctrines and constitutions of the Church the result would have been far more disastrous than the Reformation. The whole feeling of Europe was opposed to the Catholic idea in politics and therefore implicitly in religion. The ideas that were later to be named

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

From the painting by Moroni (?) in the Louvre

Gallicanism were everywhere in the ascendant. France had taken the lead in the struggle against both Pope and Empire, and proclaimed its practical independence by the pragmatic sanction of Bourges. The opposition to the universal jurisdiction of the Church was steadily growing in all other countries. There was a very considerable danger, which would have become pressing had the Councils seriously discussed reform, that the Universal Church might split up into a number of national institutions, only loosely connected with Rome. We can see how such an event might have occurred, by observing the recent history of the Eastern Church which, in the course of the last hundred years, has divided into a number of autocephalous State Churches, despite the protests of the Oecumenical Patriarchate. From this fate the Church was saved in the sixteenth century by the great revolution. The disease had spread too far to be cured by palliatives: the life of the whole could be preserved only by the amputation of many gangrened members.

The fundamental tenets of the Reformation were the denial of spiritual authority and the assertion of individualism. It was therefore natural that the Reformation itself should degenerate into spiritual anarchy. In opposing authority the chief Reformers had only thought of the authority of Rome, and they did not realize till too late that their doctrine implied very much more. They refused, however, to recognize the logical outcome of their premises and persecuted one another with quite orthodox zeal. When a few Italians, with that love for logic which is characteristic of their race, pushed Luther's

arguments to their obvious conclusions, the Protestants stood aghast. Giordano Bruno can hardly be considered a Christian, and, had he not been burnt by the Holy Office, he would have probably been burnt, sooner or later, by the Calvinists. Fausto Sozzini attacked, with equal vigour, impartiality, and logic, the authority of the Church, transubstantiation, justification by faith, and the divinity of Christ. He was relentlessly persecuted by the Protestants, yet the modernists and rationalists of the present day should have the grace and courage to revere him as their master. No Italian has ever been able to understand why one should deny the infallibility and yet believe in transubstantiation, deny transubstantiation and believe in the Virgin birth, deny the Virgin birth and believe in the divinity of Our Lord.

The princes who had adopted Protestantism in order to obtain a supremacy over the Church in their own territories now found themselves obliged to defend the selected opinions not only against the efforts of the Catholics, but also against the far more serious attacks of rival sects. In England the union between Church and State became more and more complete, for the Crown alone could protect the Church which it had called into being from the attacks of Catholics and Puritans. It therefore gradually became the most servile of all the departments of the government. After the great crisis of the seventeenth century, in which it had taken a notable part, it sank into complete insignificance, and attempts at a spiritual regeneration almost invariably resulted in a schism, either in the direction

of Protestantism, as in the case of the Wesleyans, or in that of Rome, as in the case of the Oxford movement. Yet its crowning humiliation has only taken place during our own generation, when a Parliament comprising Anglicans, Catholics, Nonconformists, Jews, and freethinkers discussed and decided its liturgy and doctrines.

The reformation of the Catholic Church was conducted on entirely opposite principles. Centralization and authority were to be maintained at any cost. The Council of Trent, while reforming the manners of the clergy and abolishing many abuses, increased the Papal power to a point that might have surprised the men of the Middle Ages. Uniformity became the real test of Catholicity. All the different liturgies, with the exception of the Ambrosian and the Mozarabic, were abolished in the West, and the Roman liturgy itself was much simplified and perfected. The Council made no new departures in speculative theology, and did not attempt to decide the new problems, such as those on predestination, which were argued as hotly among the Catholics as among the Protestants. It must be looked upon as the close of one period, rather than as the beginning of a new one. Its object was to define and consolidate the positions which had been won by the events and speculations of the Middle Ages, and in this it was successful. Since those days no temporal power has ever claimed the right to interfere in ecclesiastical matters, to decide dogmatic or liturgical problems, or to consecrate bishops. The individuality of the various national Churches was as far as possible suppressed, and the whole of

Catholicism was policed by the Jesuits, the new spiritual militia entirely dependent on the Pope. Even the fine arts were renovated, and the early Baroque churches, with their unity and simplicity of plan and their austere magnificence, express more clearly than any verbal exposition the ideals of the Counter-Reformation.

The Catholic counter-attack was immediately successful, and the tide of Protestantism, which seemed to be about to overwhelm the whole world, was gradually checked and thrown back. So vigorous were the Catholics and so feeble the Protestants that for a moment it looked as though the new doctrines might be destroyed as completely as those of the Albigenses. Why the Counter-Reformation, having accomplished so much, did not succeed in effecting more is a problem deserving the closest study and its answer is to be found in the political and not in the religious state of Europe at that time.

The struggle over the investitures had been a religious contest carried on under the disguise of politics; the 'Wars of Religion' were really a political contest, only nominally inspired by religious motives. The Reformation had represented the revolt of all the lesser European powers against the greater ones, for England cannot be considered a power of the first rank till the end of the seventeenth century. The greater powers therefore became the natural support of Catholicism within their own territories, but, far from co-operating with one another in foreign policy, they each continued their own traditional jealousies and enmities. The attempt of the Popes of the Renaissance to

found a great Italian monarchy had been frustrated in 1527 by the troops of the most Catholic and Apostolic Caesarean Majesty, which sacked Rome and captured the Pope. But, if this disaster set limits to the Pope's temporal power, the Counter-Reformation greatly increased his spiritual authority. The medieval pretensions which had been allowed to lie dormant since the days of Avignon were revised and restated by Bellarmine. The Jesuits, in demanding an absolute obedience to the Pope, were always ready on occasion to permit, and indeed encourage, resistance to the temporal government by declaring that the power of the prince was derived from that of the people.

These doctrines were just as objectionable to the Catholic sovereigns as to the Protestants against whom they were directed, and at once met with very determined opposition. The great Catholic states, Spain, Austria, France, were quite as nationalist as their Protestant enemies or allies, and would have liked to control their national Church with the same absolute authority that was enjoyed by the English crown. They were by no means willing to assent to a Papal or to a popular sovereignty. When Pius V issued the famous Bull *In Coena Domini*, which proclaimed, in almost medieval language, all the medieval pretensions of the Roman See, even Philip II of Spain made the Pope understand that he had gone too far. When that same saintly but impetuous Pontiff deposed Queen Elizabeth, he created a precedent alarming even to Catholic sovereigns, who were naturally attached to the doctrine of Divine Right.

The great controversy which broke out between Paul V and Venice finally taught the Papacy that it could no longer interfere with impunity in the internal affairs of sovereign states. If, unblinded by the vigour and genius of Fra Paolo Sarpi, we examine the actual questions in dispute with an impartial eye, we must admit that the Papal case was far stronger than is usually alleged. The rights claimed by Rome, though they had become impossible to enforce in practice, were supported by a long and venerable tradition. The Venetian Republic was haughty and arrogant. The compromise by which the affair was finally settled was, in appearance, most favourable to the Pope. But the substantial victory remained with the Republic. It yielded to the friendly representations of France which wished to avoid a general conflagration, and it accompanied its concessions with important reservations. The Pope had made use of his most formidable weapon, the interdict, and it had broken in his hands; Venice had celebrated even the festival of Corpus Christi with particular magnificence. He had not been able to obtain the restoration of the Jesuits, who had been expelled because they had obeyed his commands. He had been made to understand that, if he were to push matters to extremes, the secular clergy would obey the government, which had thus the power to cause a schism.

It was therefore obvious that, in the circumstances, the Catholic idea could remain vital only so long as the great European monarchies remained comparatively weak. Each sovereign was endeavouring to centralize his own rule, and was consequently

unwilling to tolerate any divergence of opinion within his own dominions. But there was a grave danger that, when he had succeeded in crushing the Protestant party, he might then turn on the Church and render it subject not to the Pope but to himself. Thus the Papacy was committed to the traditional Roman policy of *Divide et Impera*, to the preservation of the balance of power in Europe. As a temporal state of the second rank, it was even more interested in the matter, especially in its repercussions on the balance of power in Italy itself. Towards the end of the sixteenth century it seemed as though Spain was going to obtain the absolute hegemony in the world, but at the critical moment the Pope, by absolving Henri IV, restored the French monarchy as a counterpoise to the power of the House of Austria.

The careful preservation of the balance of power became far more important than the diffusion of Catholicism. During the course of the Thirty Years' War the German Protestants were completely crushed, and Catholicism was about to be restored to its full dominion from the Vistula to the Rhine, and from the North Sea to the Alps. The Emperor Ferdinand II was determined to crush heresy and autonomy together, and to achieve the task which had been vainly attempted by Charles V. The Imperial prerogative was stretched to its fullest, even to an illegal, extent, and the rights and liberties of the Germanic body were ruthlessly trampled under foot. And it was clearly only a beginning. There was reason to suspect that Ferdinand, having once rendered himself supreme in Germany, would

seek to restore the Imperial authority in Italy, and even to claim the crown that no Emperor had received since the days of Charles V.

Little wonder that the Roman Curia began to be seriously alarmed at the progress of the Catholic armies and at the victories of Tilly and Wallenstein. It was not forgotten that the policy of Charles V had led to the sack of Rome and the enslavement of Clement VII. Was Ferdinand likely to show a greater respect for the rights of the Holy See than his predecessor, or would he not treat them as he had already treated those of the German princes? The supremacy of the House of Austria might be too great a price to pay for the triumph of Catholicism. Thus it was that, at the crisis of the war, the Papacy threw in its lot, unofficially but no less effectively, on the side of the princes against the Emperor. France, governed by a Prince of the Church, who had distinguished himself by his vigorous persecution of the French Protestants, took the same side. The German Protestant states became what the Guelph nobles had been in former centuries, the protectors of the Papacy against the Empire. The Lutheran forces of Gustavus Adolphus saved the Pope as completely as the Saracen cavalry of Robert Guiscard.

Unfortunately, the two objects of the Papacy, the propagation of Catholicism and the maintenance of the balance of power, were contradictory. It would be a mistake to suggest that this was the conflict of its spiritual and its temporal policy. The complete independence of the Pope is as necessary to the spiritual life of the Church as belief in any

of the decisions of the Tridentine Council. But these two aims were in practice incompatible, and the Papal legates at the Treaty of Westphalia protested querulously and vainly against the stipulations of a peace which, by crippling the Imperial power, was the triumph of the Roman policy.

The gradual decline of both the Spanish and the German branches of the House of Austria left the French monarchy for a time supreme in Europe. Thus the arrogant French nationalism engaged the Papacy in a long series of controversies, which greatly weakened the authority of all the disputants and whose faint echoes can still be heard reverberating at the present day. Louis XIV, who was crushing the Huguenots with revolting ferocity,[1] attempted to render himself the virtual head of the Church in France, where the Jansenist controversy had already seriously shaken the position of Catholicism. When the great convocation of 1682, directly inspired by the Royal ministers, issued the celebrated manifesto containing the four Gallican articles, Louis seemed about to follow in the footsteps of Henry VIII, a monarch whom he resembled in other respects. A new schism was imminent, for the King, in virtue of the Concordat, made full use of his right of nominating bishops to vacant dioceses, while Pope Innocent XI and his successors firmly refused to grant the Royal nominees spiritual institution. The situation had apparently reached a deadlock, when the Church was once more saved at the cost of consenting to the final triumph of Protestantism in England and Holland.

[1] His action was vigorously condemned by the Pope.

The fact that the Papacy had twice been saved by Protestant arms was not likely to increase its spiritual authority which, during the course of the seventeenth century, began to be attacked from an entirely different quarter. The Church, which had withstood so successfully the Protestant attack, was itself distracted by internal jealousies. The Society of Jesus, which more than any other had contributed to the success of the Counter-Reformation, was bitterly attacked by the older orders and by the secular clergy, which were envious of its power, wealth, and influence. Above all, the Dominicans, who had been founded in order to fight heresy, felt that the new order was usurping functions to which they were themselves entitled. The governments were naturally suspicious of an order which they could not control, which was autocratically governed, and whose chief tenet was absolute obedience to the Pope.

It is curious that the attack should have first come from Spain, the country which had given birth to the founder. But in Spain the Dominicans were supreme and, divorced almost entirely from the contemporary life of Europe, they were still attached to every letter of the old scholastic philosophy. Their great doctor, St Thomas Aquinas, was held to be infallible. The Jesuits, led by the celebrated Molina, were trying to combat the diffusion of Calvinism and to emphasize the freedom of the individual soul by elaborating a new conception of grace which was fundamentally opposed to the Tomist doctrines.

The general feeling of the Church was at first

unfavourable to the new theology, and Molinism was almost condemned in Rome. But from a theological discussion between two rival orders the question developed into a movement which nearly destroyed the whole Church, giving rise in France to the famous Jansenist controversy, which was so closely connected with Gallicanism. Though the actual doctrine of grace from which the whole discussion arose has never been dogmatically and irrevocably defined, the bull *Unigenitus* turned the scale in favour of the Jesuit theology. Yet the controversy was fatal not only to the order itself but to the Church as a whole. The Jansenists were undoubtedly people of great and austere piety; the Church had triumphed only because it was supported by a grossly corrupt and infidel court. The arguments which the Jansenists had used against Rome were eagerly turned by sceptics against Christianity itself, in whatever form.

The Jesuits have always been singularly unfortunate in their polemics. Though they have numbered in their ranks men of the greatest piety and learning, they have seldom produced any of those great works which by their style and spirit alone enslave and dominate the human understanding. Great learning is theirs unquestionably, yet it is often presented in an unattractive manner: not theirs the charm of the *Fioretti* or the sublime majesty of the *Summa*. Petavius, Escobar, Molina are well worth reading, but not for pleasure. The fate of the Jesuits teaches us that great writers may rise superior to truth itself. Pascal was grossly unfair and often guilty of deliberate misrepresentation, yet the *Lettres Provinciales*

remains one of the greatest books ever written.[1] We know that the Jesuit administration of Paraguay was excellent, that indeed it was the only colonial administration of its time which did not violate systematically every principle of common morality, yet who can forget certain adventures of Candide?

The new learning which had been born during the Renaissance continued to develop and began to study new problems. Philosophy and ethics were no longer considered as forming an essential part of theology. The contempt of the Renaissance for every manifestation of the Middle Ages was confirmed and increased. Since the scholastics, in adapting Aristotle to Christian theology, had accepted his whole system of natural philosophy, the rise of new and anti-Aristotelian methods of scientific investigation damaged indirectly but no less seriously the position of the Church. The Dominicans, who were in charge of the Inquisition, were, of course, the most ardent supporters of the medieval system, and thus came in conflict with the new sciences. Galileo had only himself to thank for his misfortunes. He never seems to have realized that the heliocentric theory was after all most disconcerting, and that the Ptolemaic system was far more satisfactory to the human senses and far more flattering to the human vanity. The sarcasm with which he overwhelmed his opponents was quite unjustified in a scientific controversy, and was quite gratuitous, since he had been received in

[1] Even if in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Jesuits had really degenerated, Pascal, as a Catholic, might have remembered and considered their great and unquestionable services to the faith in a former age.

Rome with the greatest possible respect.[1] All things considered, the Holy Office treated him with remarkable leniency, but it condemned his theories. In deciding the question at all it overstepped its powers, but the result was to place the Church in opposition to the new learning and in a most embarrassing position during the Jansenist controversy. It must be admitted that the Church learnt its lesson, and has never made that mistake again. Wiser than its Protestant sisters, it has kept clear of evolution, and has not committed itself in an irrevocable manner on any historical or scientific matters. Yet the condemnation of Galileo was a potent source of infidelity.

Throughout the course of the eighteenth century the influence of the Church, and of Christianity as well, was steadily on the decline. The learning, both historical and scientific, which the Church had so valiantly supported and munificently encouraged was now turned against it. The close connexion between Church and State was disastrous for both. The crown, by making full use of its prerogative under the Concordat, elevated to benefices men who openly scoffed at the mysteries which they were supposed to celebrate, men like that Benedictine abbot whose confession has been so characteristically repeated by Gibbon: ' "My vow of poverty has given me a hundred thousand crowns a year; my vow of obedience has raised me to the dignity of a sovereign prince." I forget the consequences of his vow of chastity.' For sixty years the French Church

[1] The Church had not condemned Copernicus and would not have condemned Galileo had he conducted himself with greater prudence.

was in the hands of the Regent and of Louis XV. Every new instance of injustice, intolerance and oppression was justly or unjustly attributed to the Church, and a million voices took up the cry that rang out from Ferney: *Ecrasez l'infâme!*

The attack on Christianity was conducted by the greatest minds of the century, yet it was not, and could not have been, successful, for it was merely destructive. It was an intellectual fashion, which changed and fluctuated unceasingly. One fashion had hardly arisen when it was supplanted by a new one. The author of the *Pucelle* was stigmatized as a bigot because he had remained a deist. Baron Holbach's ideas—and even more his dinner-parties —supplanted those of Voltaire and Rousseau. It was easy to be a virtuous atheist when one had an assured position, a vast income, and an excellent cook. There was something always unreal and insincere about philosophers and reformers, among whose greatest admirers were Frederic II and the Empress Catherine. There was little about them of the enthusiasm of the Ghibellines or of the Reformers, none of the fire of Dante or of Knox; it was more a game with which to while away the tedium of existence. The whole movement was part of the general unrest, an unrest more social and economic than spiritual. But the social and economic unrest was really serious and well founded, and it was unfortunate that the Church had been forced by the Reformation to associate itself so closely with those arbitrary powers that during the Middle Ages it had so constantly and successfully opposed.

The Church was among the greatest sufferers

from the triumph of absolutism which marked the close of the war of the Spanish Succession. It had, it is true, been able to obtain in France the suppression of the Jansenists and the withdrawal of the Gallican articles, but at an immense spiritual price. In Europe the balance of power was entirely altered, and in Italy new arrangements were made without considering the rights of the Holy See and even without consulting it. The supremacy of Austria became absolute in the peninsula, and the decline of the power of Spain, from which the Papacy had always had much to gain and little to fear, was a grave blow. Rome, which a century earlier had held the European balance, was now contemptuously allowed to exist on sufferance.

Benedict XIV, who united in himself all the best characteristics of the age—wit, learning, tolerance —and the piety and charity of earlier times, attempted to yield what could no longer be withheld and, by means of concordats with the various states, implicitly relinquished the medieval pretensions of his predecessors. Clement XIV, menaced by all the Bourbon states and abandoned by the pious Maria Theresa, who 'wept and asked for more,' went still farther, suppressed the Jesuits, and prohibited the reading of the Bull *In Coena Domini*.

These measures came too late, and in any case could not have averted the storm. The humours, too long repressed, had to be allowed to burst forth with violence; the birth of the contemporary world was accompanied by all the pains and dangers of labour. It was again a time like the Reformation when a radical operation was less dangerous to the

organism than a series of palliatives. The monarchs were anxious to make the greatest concessions to the reforming spirit at the least cost to themselves and they were in desperate need of money. They naturally turned on the Church as the richest, the most defenceless, and the most unpopular institution. Had this period continued the Church might have slowly expired through inanition, but the revolution came in time to save it.

The Deluge swept everything before it, Church and monarchs, Jesuits and Jansenists, reformers and reactionaries, without distinction of frontiers or nationality. The Pope, who had gone to Vienna to humble himself in vain before a sceptical sovereign whose titles still alleged him to be the protector of the Church which he was despoiling, died a prisoner and an exile in the hands of infidels. When the work of destruction was sufficiently complete, a new despotism arose, and the upstart power, surrounded on all sides by the smoking ruins of millenary institutions, sought out the only earthly authority that could render its position legitimate. The concordat of 1801 was Napoleon's first step towards the Empire.

Napoleon's conception of himself as the successor of Charlemagne, a conception which guided his whole policy, was a curious but comprehensible delusion, and is one more illustration of the danger of a slight knowledge of history. Charles and Napoleon had little more in common than the fact that neither was a Frenchman. The Roman Emperor, crowned by God, placed high above nations, which he ruled by a peaceful and acceptable authority,

THE NEW CHARLEMAGNE

From the painting by David in the Louvre

had little resemblance to the military despot, the oppressor of the Church, the child of the Revolution, the exponent of French imperialism and nationalism. Napoleon was in many ways far more the successor of Louis XIV than of Charlemagne, the restorer of the Catholic idea in Europe, or of Augustus, the chief magistrate of the Republic.

The mission of the Revolution and of the French Empire was to destroy, not to create, and still less to go back to the times of the Carolingians. The Roman and Catholic idea had died with the Hohenstaufen, and had been buried at the Reformation. Yet, a homeless ghost, the Holy Roman Empire, no longer holy, nor Roman, nor an empire, still hovered over the struggle of nationalism, imperialism and autocracy. It was high time that this ghost should be laid for ever, for all the venerable yet useless relics of antiquity were now to be swept away. The Venetian republic had gone; the Pope was soon reduced to the head of a French department. On the second of December, 1805, the sun of Austerlitz set on the Empire that had been first created by the citizen legions of Rome.

CHAPTER XV

UNITED ITALY AND THE LOSS OF THE TEMPORAL POWER

ἀνδρῶν δικαίων χρόνος σωτὴρ ἄριστος.
Pindar Frag. 159.

THE storm-tossed bark of St Peter finally came to rest on the Ararat of the Vienna Congress. Rudderless, stripped of all its gear, and leaking from every seam, it still contrived to keep afloat. As the waters receded an entirely new world was revealed, a world in which the Papacy and a few old dynasties seemed to be the only survivors of the antediluvian monsters, of the giant races before the flood. We know what happened after the Deluge: the sovereigns and ministers gathered at Vienna would have readily enjoyed the intoxication of victory had they not rightly feared that their peoples would soon discover and mock their nakedness. They made a painstaking attempt to return as far as possible to the earlier state of affairs, but the history of the last thirty years could not be cancelled. Most of the larger German states had devoured the smaller ones, and it was impossible, if not actually indecent, to force the cannibals to disgorge. The Reformation had formulated and now the Congress officially proclaimed the still accepted political dogma that stolen property is never returned to its original owner. In

Germany in particular the Church had been the greatest sufferer through the secularization of the great ecclesiastical principalities, and everywhere its financial losses had been considerable.

The Church, however, was one of the chief gainers at the Congress. Of the four allied powers that had overthrown Napoleon, three, it is true, were not Catholic, but the Church had been attacked with extraordinary violence both by the Revolution and by Napoleon. Now that the principles of legitimacy were to be emphasized again, it was necessary to do something for the Church and render it, if possible, the supporter of the new state of affairs, which needed all the support it could get. This reaction would have benefited Christianity but little had it been dictated by political considerations alone. It was, however, only part of a general revulsion of feeling, not so much a reaction as a change and an advance. The priesthood had lost its most odious privileges, and had been forced to return to a state of apostolic poverty and simplicity; the memory of the persecutions which it had suffered cancelled that of the persecutions which it had inflicted. The Gallican and Jansenist controversies were forgotten; the very powers which had been most active in obtaining the suppression of the Jesuits now desired the order to be re-established. The Protestant states mitigated the laws against Catholics, and thus opened a new missionary field. The intellectuals who had led the attack on Christianity had been the first to suffer from the Revolution, and were now active in the support of their former enemy. Rousseau had preached the doctrine of the

noble savage: those who had assisted at the Terror, and even more those who had heard of it at third or fourth hand, were in no doubt as to the innate savagery of civilized man—his innate nobility was more questionable.

Most important of all was the radical change of taste. The standards of the eighteenth century, the standards which Voltaire probably considered unquestionable and immortal, were swept away and Romanticism occupied the stage. Like the former scepticism, it was little more than a passing fashion, not superior to it in intellectual merit and far inferior to it in wit, but its effect was immediate and profound. The new generations no longer considered the *Henriade* and *Zaire* perfect models of poetry and drama, they no longer scoffed at the style of Shakespeare or Isaiah. Olympus, Parnassus, and the even more fabulous Roman Senate, whose members were all supposed to be married to mothers of the Gracchi, all the neo-classic properties were completely discarded and an equally impossible conception of the Middle Ages, with battlemented castles, mullioned windows, Gothic churches, was eagerly exploited. The Romantic movement naturally caused a change of feeling about the Church; it might still be hated, but it could not be ignored. Even a Romantic castle had to have its chapel.

More accurate and extensive historical studies began to prove that most of the premises of the Reformers and of the philosophers were demonstrably false. The course of the intellectual change may be observed in the studies concerning Joan of Arc. The obscenity of Voltaire was succeeded by

the sentimentality of Schiller, and it again by the publication of the historical evidence. Even the freethinker now admitted that an intelligent man could remain a Christian. It was even possible to be pious without belief. Christianity owes much to Renan, who was considered its greatest enemy. He destroyed the intellectual basis of anti-clericalism, which, since his day, has been abandoned contemptuously to the lower class of demagogue. No new Gibbon, no new Voltaire are ever likely to arise again.

In Germany the Napoleonic wars, by sweeping away a host of petty principalities, had awakened a Germanic nationalism which was an entirely new phenomenon in Europe. Now that the Empire, the authority of which the German princes had so long opposed, had finally passed away, the German romantics began to consider that period as the most glorious in their history and to blame the policy of Austria, not altogether unjustly, for its decline. Hostility to particularism and to the selfish jealousies of the smaller states grew more and more marked. The question was not a religious one; Catholics were as enthusiastic as Protestants in the cause of a united Germany, and the German Catholics are now the staunch supporters of the Republic. German nationalism was a perfectly natural, spontaneous, unhurried development, and thus the German Empire has survived the German Emperor. In these circumstances there was nothing to impede the growth of the Church. The new nationalism was a purely internal affair; it was not the imperialist nationalism and individualism of a Louis XIV or a Frederic II.

It was in Italy alone that Catholicism encountered a most determined opposition, and the Italian question became at once the greatest difficulty of the Papacy. The Congress of Vienna had been able to do in Italy what it had failed to do elsewhere and restore to a very considerable extent the state of affairs which existed before the Revolution. Nowhere else were the governments so incompetent, the abuses more frightful, the rulers more absolute.[1] Austria, by the annexation of Venice, had become the predominant power in the peninsula, and the weak despotism of the other governments sought in Austria support and counsel. Though Pius VII and his minister, Cardinal Consalvi, abolished feudalism in the Roman Campagna, refused to approve the Holy Alliance, and gave proof of their really Christian spirit by offering hospitality to the Bonaparte family, it was inevitable that the Papal States should fall more and more under Austrian influence, especially in Romagna, where the Austrians kept a garrison at Ferrara. At the same time the effect of the Napoleonic wars had been even greater in Italy than elsewhere. Italian nationalism, unlike the German, was no new phenomenon. It was indeed so old that it had begun to be considered a poet's dream, an impossible Utopia that could never be realized in practice. And now, after a thousand years, there had arisen once more a kingdom of Italy and regiments of Italian soldiers had fought in Germany and on the Beresina.

The Papacy naturally found itself in an extra-

[1] For a graphic picture of life in Northern Italy from 1815 to 1830 see Stendhal, *La Chartreuse de Parme*.

ordinarily delicate and difficult position. Since the days of Constantine it had striven with all its power to avoid the formation of a strong Italian state. The Church is Roman and Catholic, and the two adjectives are almost synonymous. It is therefore impossible to separate the Bishop from the Diocese, the spirit of Rome from the physical city. The experience of Avignon had taught that it was impossible to maintain the doctrine that *Ubi Papa, ibi Roma*. But in order that the spiritual authority of the Popes should be truly Roman and Catholic it was essential that the person and diocese of Christ's Vicar should be absolutely independent of any temporal state. Since any state which became predominant in Italy could naturally overshadow and overawe the Papacy, it was necessary, first, that none of the established monarchies should become too powerful in Italy, and secondly, that Italy itself should remain as far as possible a 'geographical expression.' In obedience to this policy the Popes had helped Justinian to destroy the Gothic monarchy, had called upon the Franks to protect them from the Lombards, had invited the Saxon Kings to free the Chair of St Peter from its subjection to the Roman and Italian nobility, had encouraged particularism in Italy in order to defend themselves from the Emperor, had welcomed the victories of Protestant states which had successively checked the imperialism of Austria, Spain, and France. During the Renaissance the Popes had for a moment dreamt of becoming themselves the sovereigns of a great Italian state and, though that plan had proved unrealizable, the States of the Church

formed one of the most important sovereignties in the peninsula. It was impossible to contemplate a united Italy which did not include the Papal dominions. The Temporal Power had the negative value of rendering a great territorial monarchy absolutely impossible.

The patriots, however, were in an equally difficult situation. Though Italian nationalism had an imposing literary tradition, there was no historical peg on which to hang it, like the memories of the Empire in Germany. Kingdom, Confederation, Republic had each their supporters, who were as bitter against one another as against the foreigner. The differences between the various states in tradition, history, customs, wealth, education, language even, would have rendered a federal union the easiest and most acceptable solution. Piedmont, the strongest independent state in Italy, was also the least characteristically Italian, and was still considered half alien by the great majority of the people. The worst government in Italy, because the most incompetent, was probably the Papal government in the Romagna and the Marches, but elsewhere there was little theoretic hostility to the Papacy. The Lombard league, of which the Popes had been such strong supporters, was the most glorious period of Italian history, and Manzoni, Catholic and patriot, expressed the feelings of his contemporaries. On the other hand, Dante, whose invectives against the corruption of the Church formed the delight of the anti-clericals, had been the strong supporter of an Empire of which the Austrians were quite erroneously considered to be

the successors. The scheme of the neo-Guelphs, a federation of Italian states under the presidency of the Pope, would at one moment have been feasible had Austria been willing to abandon the Lombardo-Venetian provinces, but such a solution, though ideally the most satisfactory, would certainly have had a short life. The Popes would not have been able to preside for long over a purely political confederation which, like the German, would have grown more and more nationalist and imperialist. It is the duty of the Pope to remain neutral in all political conflicts which do not directly endanger the spiritual life of the whole Church. Pius IX quite rightly refused to declare war on Austria in 1848, yet all the patriots and neo-Guelphs considered him a traitor.

The federalism of Gioberti and of the neo-Guelphs was rendered impossible by the disastrous conclusion of the war of 1848-9. Despite the incapacity of the Piedmontese generals, and the lack of unity in the army, the Austrians might have been driven from Italy had it not been that Mazzini and the republican idealists, by their intemperance, violence and treachery, undermined the national forces and disgusted all the moderate liberals. Mazzini was the greatest of those numerous Italians who, before and since, have often preferred their ideals to the welfare of their country. The real result of the war was to create a general disgust for republicanism, and to force monarchs, such as the Pope and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who were at first friendly to liberal ideas, to become ardent reactionaries and inaugurate a repressive policy

when once restored to their thrones by foreign arms.

Pius IX, good, honest, courageous, but neither great nor wise, was sincerely favourable to the cause of reform and to the vague policy of the neo-Guelphs. He was soon disappointed in his hopes and disgusted by the unreasonable violence of the extreme radicals, and of demagogues such as Ciceruacchio. The Romans certainly wanted a better government, in which laymen should predominate; they would perhaps have liked a federal union with Italy, but they were fond of the Church and they loved their Pope. Even as to-day, they were profoundly conservative. The Pope, by his first reforms, unchained and ungagged a number of roughs and hooligans, who began at once to dominate and terrorize the moderate party. With the outbreak of war with Austria, Pius IX found it increasingly difficult to reconcile his duties as head of the Universal Church with his duties as a petty Italian sovereign. In September, 1848, he entrusted the government to Pellegrino Rossi, whose real greatness was marred by his harsh and uncomplaisant manner. Had he lived, he would have consolidated the Papal States, done away with most of the graver abuses, curbed the power of the ecclesiastics, and put an end to ruffianism. He was naturally unpopular, and on November 15 a group of hooligans assassinated him on the steps of the Cancelleria. Rome returned to the Middle Ages; the rabble, which had some of the vices and none of the virtues of the Parisian terrorists, seized the city, and the Pope, like his predecessors in similar

circumstances, fled to the Neapolitan kingdom, the faithful refuge of the Papacy. Thus began the Roman Republic.

Whether assassination is ever meritorious is a question by no means easy to answer with confidence. Let us examine but one case. Anyone who is able to save the lives and properties of countless fellow beings performs a highly meritorious act. Ravaillac, by murdering Henri IV, certainly prevented a war which would have brought death and misery to countless of his fellow beings. *Ergo* . . .? Had Pellegrino Rossi not been murdered there would have been no Roman Republic. If the Roman Republic was justified, then the murder of Rossi was justified. Garibaldi, displaying less ' intellectual confusion ' than his great English panegyrist, praised without reserve ' the steel of Brutus.'[1]

The Republic, after a short but not inglorious life, fell unlamented by the Roman people, whose most cherished sentiments it had offended. The Pope, restored and maintained by French bayonets, naturally abandoned his former liberal sympathies and returned to the oppressive and autocratic system of Gregory XVI. There was nothing else to do, and, even if there had been, there was no man who could have resumed and continued Rossi's policy. At the same time, the Pope, in recovering his sovereignty, lost his independence, for once more Rome became a French protectorate. The restoration of the Temporal Power in 1849 was

[1] George Macaulay Trevelyan, *Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic*, London, 1914, p. 83. It is regrettable that so brilliant a work should remind one so often of the *Acta Sanctorum*.

really its end. For another twenty years it lingered on, despised and useless, kept alive by its French doctor. With the constitution in 1860 of an Italian kingdom it lost its real purpose and became an unreal anachronism. That temporal power which was essential to the complete independence of the Pope became the greatest obstacle to his real independence and to the complete exercise of his Catholic authority.

On the 20th September, 1870, the troops of the newly constituted kingdom of Italy entered Rome through a breach in the Aurelian walls. The resistance had been purely formal, and the Pope, who had been offered the sovereignty of the Leonine city, retired to the Vatican which, from that day to this (21 April, 1929), none of his successors has ever abandoned. Despite his protests and appeals, none of the Catholic powers made an effort to save him; perhaps fortunately, for a Pepin or a Guiscard might have proved himself to be a harder master than the new Italian state, which, having dared so much, was not inclined to go still farther. Yet many wise and learned men, such as Gregorovius, thought at the time that the Church had fallen for ever, and that the Pope, a prisoner in the Italian capital, would no longer be able to wield the universal authority of Rome. They were mistaken. On the very eve of its transformation Rome, assembling the whole Church, defined its authority before the very throne of truth. The successors of the Apostles who gathered round the tomb of Peter declared and proclaimed the universality of Rome. Many wished to declare that the temporal sovereignty of

the Holy See is founded on divine ordinance, but the Holy Ghost guides and directs the deliberations of the ecclesiastical senate. Far more precious than any temporal dominion, the Pope was freely invested with the spiritual empire over the whole Church; from a petty King he rose to be the *Pastor Aeternus*.

The world soon felt the effects of the transformation. The Pope, freed from the necessity of protecting and governing his territorial possessions, was able to resume once more his former position as the supreme spiritual guide and governor of mankind. Before 1870 any state could threaten and oppress the Papacy, or extend to it a protection that was more fatal than oppression. Now the Italian kingdom became the single enemy, an enemy, however, who could not go too far and who would not allow any other power except itself to insult the majesty of Rome.

In years to come some future historian will describe the course of the Catholic revival from 1870 to the present year. It might be entitled ' the New Roman Empire.' In it we shall find victories as complete and as brilliant as Austerlitz or Marengo, retreats more orderly than that from Moscow, a patience more remarkable than that of Fabius, a Code more perfect than the Code Napoleon. During these sixty years the Papacy has encountered successfully a number of diverse and important problems, such as would have baffled the genius of an earlier age. To-day, after a great war which divided the whole of the world into two hostile camps, its spiritual empire and authority is perhaps greater

than at any other time in its history. It has still preserved its hold on France, despite the fall of the Empire and the political changes from the days of MacMahon to those of M. Briand and of the *Action Française*, and its hold would be even stronger had the French Catholics supported more firmly the wise policy of Leo XIII. It encountered and vanquished the new German Empire with all the firmness and dignity of Gregory VII and Alexander III. In Protestant countries it has gone from victory to victory. It succeeded in preserving its independence and neutrality during the greatest conflict known to history, and has now been able to adapt itself without great difficulty to the changed conditions of Europe.

Its internal discipline has been no less wonderful than its foreign conquests. The condemnation of Modernism was received at first with mixed feelings. Many devout men who recognized its justice were inclined to doubt its opportunity. The condemnation of Jansenism had produced a serious schism; would not the *Pascendi* produce as serious a result as the *Unigenitus?* These fears were unfounded. The Modernists have started no new schism, the members of the *Action Française* are noisy but unimportant. In a few parts of the world the heathen still rage together and the people imagine a vain thing. Rome is eternal, and while it awaits with confidence the triumph of justice it can laugh their efforts to scorn. Rome has spoken: and the voice of Rome is now heard everywhere and by all mankind.

EPILOGUE

THE END OF THE ROMAN QUESTION

ὅ τι λέξω δ' ἀπορῶ.
πέτομαι δ' ἐλπίσιν, οὔτ' ἐνθάδε ὁρῶν οὔτ' ὀπίσω.
Sophocles, Oed. T. 485.

THE signing of a treaty between the Italian Government and the Holy See, finally settling the Roman question, will render the year 1929 memorable in history. The Italian Government recognizes the absolute temporal sovereignty of the Pope over a very small specified territory, and the Pope recognizes the Italian state as at present constituted, and abandons the claims to his former territories. Such an event is undoubtedly of the greatest historical importance, yet this importance may be easily exaggerated and still more easily misunderstood.

Let us first examine the two chief objections generally advanced by the numerous foreign enemies of the Fascist Government. They first of all declare that the Pope should negotiate only with the Italian people, implying that, despite the recent plebiscite, the present government does not represent the Italian people. The study of history renders one sceptical as to the real value of plebiscites, but neither the Pope nor anyone else is in a position to negotiate directly with the people and not with a government. Negotiations must be conducted by

means of representatives, and unfortunately no system has yet been found to render representatives truly representative. Does the British or the French Government claim to represent the whole nation fully and adequately? 'Ye take too much upon yourselves!'

Secondly, it is alleged that by the present Treaty the Vicar of Christ on earth recognizes and approves the Fascist Government and party. It is certain that he recognizes it, but it does not necessarily follow that he approves its principles, ideals, and methods. It is possible that he may, but we do not know and have no means of finding out. What is certain is that recognition does not imply approbation. The Pope recognizes the present French Government. His predecessors have recognized in France the ancient Bourbon monarchy, the Consulate, the First Empire, the Restoration, the monarchy of Louis Philippe, the second Republic, the second Empire, the third Republic. It is certain that these governments have not been equally admirable. Recently M. Briand was kind enough to declare that he had no desire to convert the Pope to his own ideas. Though no doubt we should pray that M. Briand, for the good of his soul, may be led into the ways of truth, there is no political reason why the Pope should try to convert M. Briand. There exists in France a stable government: it is in the interests of the Church as a whole to be in relations with it: therefore the Church should and does recognize it. The famous words 'Render unto Caesar' do not imply approval of the measures by which Caesar and Augustus overthrew the Republican constitution of Rome.

Having thus examined the objections that have been raised especially by the French press, let us now turn to the documents themselves, the Treaty and the Concordat.[1] The latter is a purely Italian document of purely Italian importance. It creates a national Italian Church, which undoubtedly possesses many important privileges. Concordats, however, are mortal. The history of those with Napoleon and with Austria is very significant. It is therefore impossible to pass judgement on the present one: we must wait to see how it will work in practice. If it breaks down it will be modified or abrogated. We must remember, however, that a concordat is a bilateral document. It confers many powers on the Church, but also many others on the State. During the last twenty years the French Government must have often regretted the loss of its former powers and privileges.

The Treaty, on the other hand, is a permanent settlement. It might be modified by the mutual consent of both parties, but no future Pope will be able to claim the patrimony of St Peter, no future Italian Government will be able to claim, as formerly under the Law of the Guarantees, the high sovereignty over the Vatican palaces. A future government might, no doubt, invade the Vatican city, even as Rome was invaded in 1870, but such an action would be an act of war and a definite violation of a solemn pledge. The Roman question is settled—but the Roman question was only one aspect of the general relations between Church and State in Italy.

[1] The Financial Agreement, though important, raises no question of principle.

The course of past history shows us that the Pope must be absolutely free and independent in order that he may fully perform those duties towards the Universal Church which are an essential part of the Petrine supremacy, and which must be considered far more as duties than as rights. This freedom and independence must be absolute, and it must be not only real but apparent and manifest to the whole world. No temporal authority whatsoever must even appear to dominate the Papacy or influence its decisions. The Pope must therefore be *sui juris*, subject to no temporal power or government. The political and juridical ideas of the modern world conceive such freedom as inherent in the person of a sovereign alone. Sovereignty, however, is still held to imply not only a moral but also a physical jurisdiction. The Pope must therefore possess a temporal sovereignty in order that he may be absolutely free and independent.

This temporal sovereignty must not be confused with a temporal power. The former is a juridical, the latter a material fact. All sovereign states are theoretically equal: in practice they are differentiated by their temporal power, which bears no relation to the extent of their territory. It is constantly changing and fluctuating, since it is the result of many different factors, moral, political, historical, financial, economic, and above all—let us be frank—military. The temporal power of Belgium, for example, is far greater than that of Abyssinia. That of Julius II was far greater than that of Pius IX in 1848; although Pius IX, in consequence of the annexation of Ferrara in 1598, enjoyed a wider temporal sovereignty.

During the earlier period of Papal history the lack of any definite conception of legal independence rendered this temporal sovereignty unnecessary: the Pope, though a subject in theory, was usually quite independent in fact. We have seen, however, the grave harm that a strong Emperor might cause to the Papacy, and consequently to the whole Church, and we must therefore conclude that the Pope needs a temporal sovereignty. But he does not need temporal power, except in so far as it may be necessary to guard and preserve this sovereignty. It is indeed hardly possible for the Pope to have sufficient temporal power for this purpose. He may dispose of sufficient force to prevent the repetition of the Anagni outrage, but not that of the capture of Rome in 1527 or 1870. It is impossible, not to say sacrilegious, to imagine the Pope participating in the struggle of armaments.

Since at present the only object of a material Papal State is not to give him temporal power, but merely to justify and allow the Pope's legal sovereignty, the territorial limits of such a State may be very small; indeed the smaller the better. No power is often better than insufficient power, and one of the chief glories of the present Pope is that of having placed his sovereignty on the very smallest possible territorial basis. A slightly more ample State—*the Città Leonina*, the Villa Doria and the Janiculum, the Valle Inferno and Monte Mario, the famous 'corridor to the sea,' any or all the different proposals made in the last fifty years—would have not rendered the Papal sovereignty more absolute in law, would have added nothing to the temporal

power, and would have been a source of endless inconvenience for everyone.

It has been suggested that the existence and frontiers of the new State should be internationally guaranteed. Political memories are short, yet the years of the present century have shown us how much reliance can be placed in the most solemn international obligations. The Pontifical State of Pius XI is to-day far stronger than that of Pius IX, which could exist only by the protection of Austria and France. Does anyone really believe that the events of 1870 would not have taken place if, after 1860, the Catholic powers had guaranteed the integrity of the Papal States? Another scrap of paper would have been flung into the bottomless diplomatic waste-paper basket. The integrity of the new Vatican City is protected not by armies, not by treaties, but by the moral sense and good faith of the civilized world. The Vicar of Christ puts his trust not in chariots, not in horses, but in the name of the Lord his God.

We have seen how the whole purpose of the Temporal Power was to prevent the union of Italy in a single powerful nationalist State. Once this union was consummated, the Temporal Power lost its *raison d'être*, and became both an administrative nuisance and a source of real weakness. The danger to be apprehended from Italian unity was that the Papacy, Italian in constitution but international in authority, might fall under the influence of the Italian State in the same way that at Avignon it had fallen under that of France. This is the problem that first became menacing after the Napoleonic

invasions, and became actual and immediate when the Kingdom of Italy was constituted in 1860. Had the Popes still preserved their sovereignty over Rome and its environs, with Terracina, Viterbo, and Civitavecchia, the danger to which they were exposed from the Italian State would have been just as great as at the present day—indeed it would have been much greater. The Roman question was only one aspect of the much larger Italian question: the relations between the Papacy and a united Italian State. The Roman question has been settled and the Italian question has become far clearer and more precise.

The policy pursued by Leo XIII and Pius X, a policy of definite hostility between Church and State, was undoubtedly the one which best guarded the international authority of the Holy See. But it laid an intolerable hardship on millions of Italian Catholics, and could not have been continued much longer. After the war the Vatican found itself obliged to withdraw the *Non expedit*, and to allow foreign Catholic sovereigns to visit Rome. The distinction between the Black and the White society in Rome had almost entirely disappeared, and it was becoming difficult to maintain a social separation between the foreign diplomatic representatives to the two courts. In another fifty years the protests against the loss of the Papal States would have become as futile as those against the Treaty of Westphalia or the secularization of the German bishoprics. The Roman question was dying a slow death. It was an act of supreme wisdom on the Pope's part to end it while he still had the power.

The Lateran Treaty thus closes a period in the history of the Papacy, but at the same time it opens another. Future generations will have to deal with the far more difficult Italian question. Already we hear rumours of an internationalization of the Curia and the election of a foreign Pope. No man can know the measures by which God will preserve the independence of His Church. We can await the future with confidence, certain that the Divine Providence will preserve the spiritual authority of Rome until the awful day when Christ Himself will take the place of His Vicar.

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